

# Scottish Borders Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Todlaw Playing Fields, Duns

Planning Brief

October 2012



# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

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# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

## Introduction

This planning brief sets out the main objectives and issues to be addressed relating to the existing Todlaw Playing Fields site in Duns. It provides a framework vision for the future development of the site which is allocated in the Scottish Borders Consolidated Local Plan 2011 as a housing site (ref ADUNS010).

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.

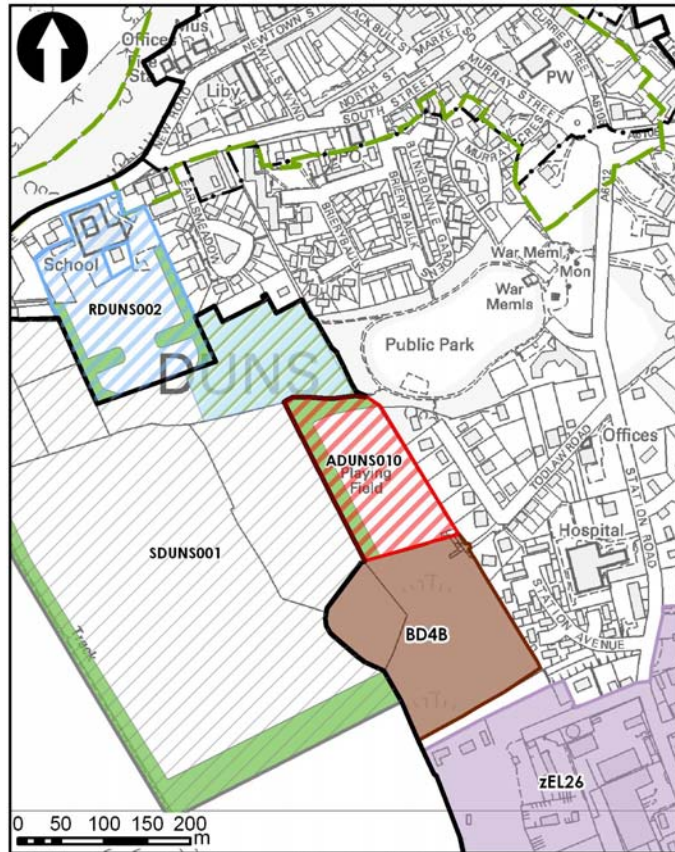
The planning brief should be read in conjunction with the developer guidance in Annex A.

Fig 1— Aerial photo of Todlaw Planning Fields site



# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

Figure 2 —Local Context



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**Key**

- ADUNS010 Housing Site Site Area: 2 Hectares
- Conservation Area (BE4)
- Redevelopment (Local Plan Policy H3)
- Development Boundary (G8)
- Housing
- Longer Term Mixed Use (Local Plan Policy H3)
- Town Centre (ED5)
- Redevelopment (Local Plan Policy H3)
- Structure Planting/Landscaping (Local Plan Policy H3)
- Employment Land Safeguarding (ED1)
- Housing (Local Plan Policy H3)
- Wetland (Local Plan Policy H3)

## 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 with 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 within the town.

# Todlaw Playing Fields 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 Todlaw Playing Fields site for housing (ADUNS010).

A number of policies included in the 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'. Furthermore, relevant Council 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'.





# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief



Figure 3—Key Issues

Key Issues:

- 1 Safeguard amenity of existing residential properties.
- 2 The site benefits from a southerly aspect.
- 3 The development of the site can take place when replacement provision for rugby and football have been provided on site zRO15 at the former Berwickshire High School site.
- 4 Existing trees and hedgerows along the eastern boundary of the site to be safeguarded
- 5 Existing vehicular arrival points from east, via gated access track.
- 6 The site is visible from the existing Public Park to the north east.

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## Key

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| ADUNS010 Housing Site (Subject to Brief) | Existing Pedestrian Access |
| Development Boundary (G8)                | Existing Vehicular Access  |
| Key Considerations                       | South Facing Aspect        |
| Arrival Point                            | Existing Trees/Landscaping |

# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

## Site analysis – context and consideration

The site is the existing playing fields at Todlaw, situated on the south western edge of Duns. The site is located within relatively close proximity to the centre of Duns and is bound by residential properties to the east, by the public park to the north east and by open ground to the north and west. To the south lies an open area of ground, and beyond that is a recent housing development by Berwickshire Housing Association.

The 2 hectare site is allocated for housing in the Consolidated Local Plan 2011 (ADUNS010) with an indicative capacity of 30 units. The site is currently used as a playing field with flood lighting around the perimeter. There are gradual ground level gradient variations throughout the site which will provide the potential for variety and interest in terms of layout and design.



Views across the site to the south

The site is in an inconspicuous location within the town and is screened from existing houses to the east by existing trees and hedgerows. The development of the site for residential use will have minimal impact on the existing settlement pattern.

The site is within walking distance of services and facilities in the town centre via the public park to the north east. There are regular bus services to Berwick where there is a main train line to Edinburgh and Newcastle.

The Consolidated Local Plan identifies access to the site from the existing housing allocation site BD4B to the south. This site is now partially developed although the northern section of the allocation remains undeveloped and it is anticipated that it would be completed before development on the site subject to this brief is commenced.



Views across site to the north

# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

## Opportunities and constraints

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

### Constraints

#### Playing Field

The existing site currently incorporates a rugby pitch. The redevelopment of the site for housing can only take place when replacement provision for pitch has been provided. It is likely this will be relocated to site zRO15, the Redevelopment Opportunity of the former Berwickshire High School site.

#### Residential Amenity

The residential amenity of the existing properties to the east of the site must be safeguarded.

#### Landscape

The existing trees and hedgerows along the eastern boundary of the site should be retained and safeguarded.

#### Ground Conditions

The adjoining land to the north has a ground water problem which would need to be addressed.

### Opportunities

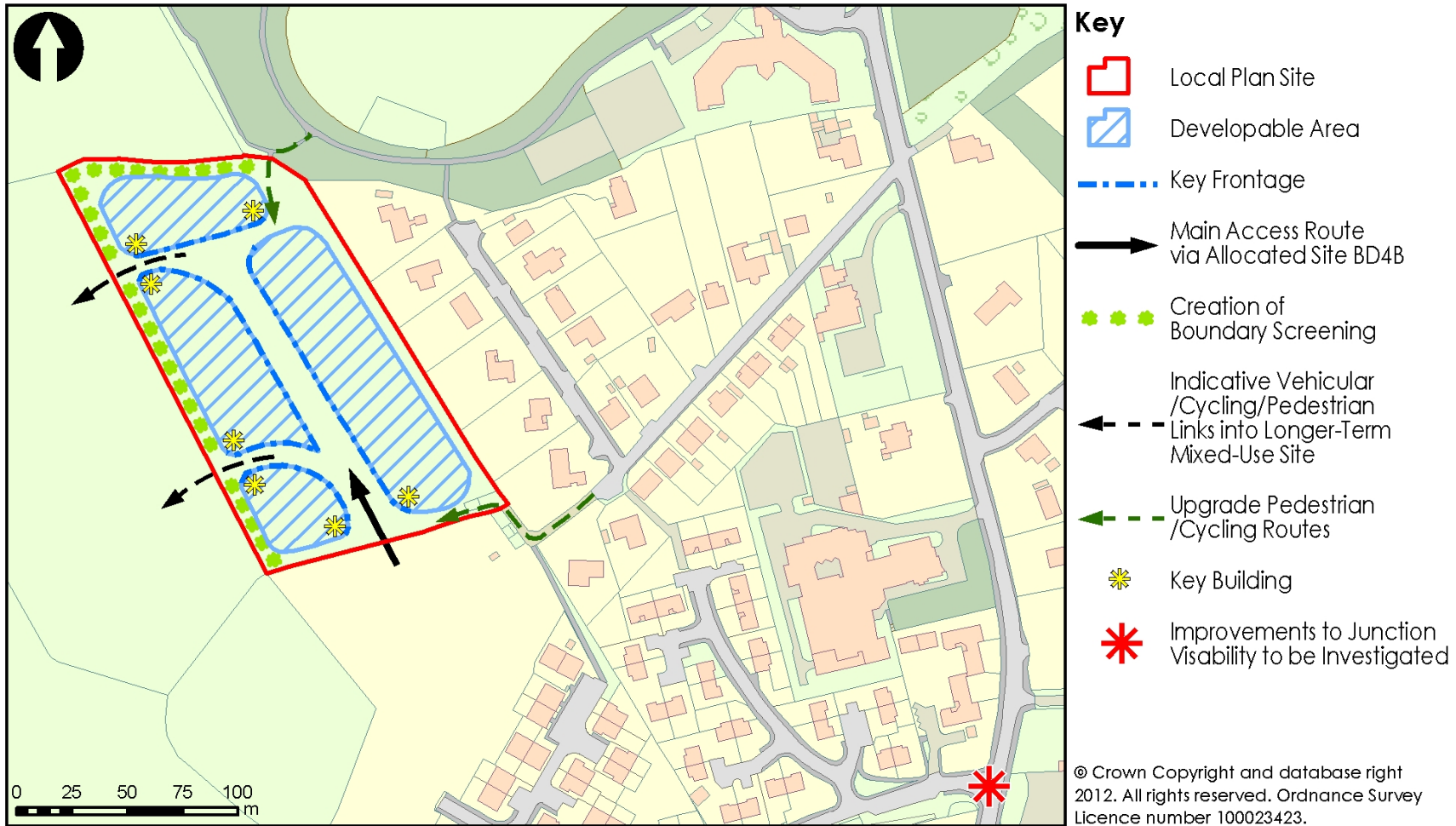
The location of the site creates a range of opportunities for the site:

- Take advantage of the views to the open countryside to the south and west.
- Take the opportunity to create a sustainable place, taking advantage of the proximity to the town and the good transport links to the wider area.
- Take the opportunity to enhance the existing landscape setting of the site with new planting, with the creation of structural landscaping, including hedges and trees, along the northern and western boundaries of the site to define it and frame development.



# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

Figure 4—Development vision (for illustrative purposes only)



# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

## Development vision

### Scale and Layout

Development of this site should create a quality residential development and an attractive scheme which integrates well with existing buildings in the vicinity. The following points should be noted :

- Fig 4 identifies key frontages along the main routes and designs fronting these should ensure an interesting and variety of facades.
- Fig 4 identifies key buildings within more prominent locations, including at entrances to the site. These should be designed as focal points.
- Building frontages should avoid unsightly garden sheds and uncoordinated fencing adjacent to streets. The streetscape should incorporate various edges ranging from hard edges of buildings to soft landscape edges of trees and shrubs.
- The proposed houses and proposed landscaping should consider overshadowing and overlooking issues.
- 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.
- A buffer area should be established around the existing trees located on the eastern boundary of the site in order to retain and safeguard these trees. This matter should be discussed with the Council prior to the submission of a formal planning application.
- Street layout should encourage lower vehicular speeds.

## Housing Density

- The site covers 2ha and can be developed with an indicative capacity of 30 units, including affordable units.
- The definitive density would be determined during the planning application process dependent on the final design and size of units.

## Buildings

### Materials

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

### House types

- There is a wide range of house types within the area and it is considered a mix of single, one and a half and two storey properties would be appropriate.

### Affordable Housing

- 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.
- The requirement for affordable housing should be met in line with Local Plan policy H1. The SPG on affordable housing advises that 25% of the development should be affordable units.

# Todlaw Playing Fields 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 main access route to the site will be via allocated site BD4B to the south. 2no accesses will link with the longer term mixed use site to the west. These links will also be for pedestrian and cyclists' use. These links and the loop road within the site will ensure satisfactory connectivity and ease of use for service vehicles.
- Improvements to junction visibility where Station Avenue joins the A6112 to be investigated to improve road safety.
- Provide new pedestrian / cycle access to the Public Park.
- A developer contribution is likely to be sought towards im-

## Landscape

### Existing and improved landscaping

- The existing trees and hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site to be retained and safeguarded as they provide a mature landscape framework for the development and safeguard the amenity of existing residential properties.
- Planting schemes should recognise the indigenous species types.
- 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.

### Street furniture

Street furniture should be used to help create high quality spaces without conflict with street cleansing. Design and maintenance arrangements to be agreed with SBC.

### Energy efficient design

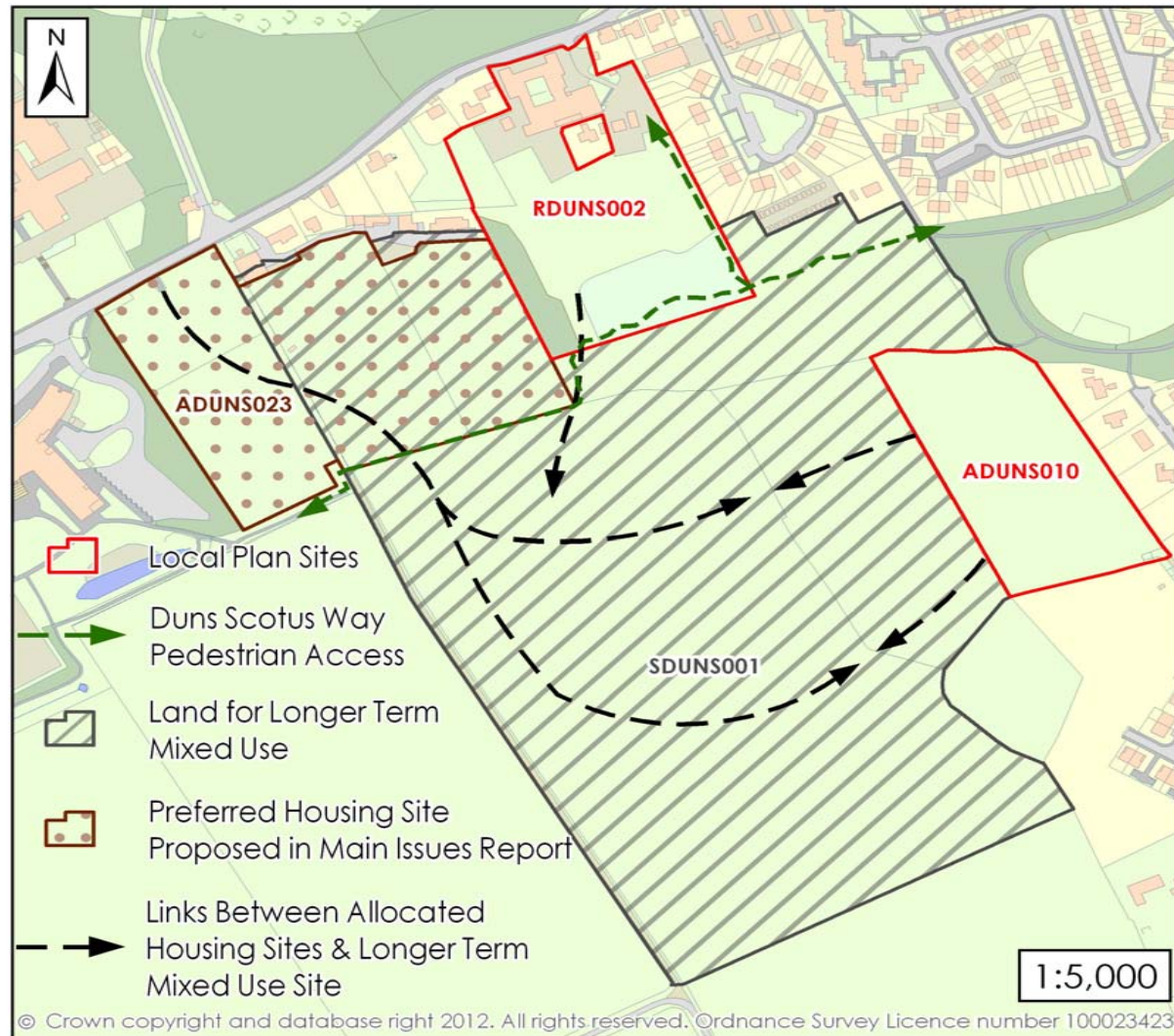
#### Eco Homes

The Council is committed to improving the sustainability of the built environment in the Borders. The development will be expected to achieve the Building Research Establishment Eco-homes rating of "Excellent" (see 'submission requirement' on page 13 for further details). The proposal should incorporate energy efficient design demonstrating how the arrangement of buildings, streets and landscape can best encourage sustainable movement and lifestyle.



# Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

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



## Todlaw Playing Fields 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 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**

Developer contributions would be required towards Berwickshire High School and Duns Primary School. Currently these are sought at £3,870 per house and £581 per flat for the High School and £2,757 per house and £413 per flat towards the Primary School. 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. This should be discussed with the Council's Development Negotiator (see contact list) at an early stage.

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

Contributions towards play areas and green space should be in line with the Council's SPG on Green Space Strategy. Given the sites very close proximity to the public park, it is likely off site contributions would be carried out as required within the public park. This matter should be discussed with the Parks Manager (see contact list on page 15) prior to any planning application being submitted.

### **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.

# Todlaw Playing Fields 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 demonstrate through a traffic assessment 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.

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	

## Todlaw Playing Fields Planning Brief

### Contacts

#### Planning & Regulatory Services

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#### Neighbourhood Services

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