

Scottish Borders Consolidated Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Former Royal Hotel Site, Stow

Mini Planning Brief

July 2012



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Former Royal Hotel Site Mini Planning Brief

Introduction

This mini planning brief sets out the main opportunities and constraints for the redevelopment of the former Royal Hotel site, Stow. This planning brief provides an indicative framework vision for the site and aims to lead to a high quality redevelopment in the heart of the Stow Conservation Area.

It should be noted that as with all planning briefs, this brief should be read in conjunction with the Consolidated Structure Plan, Consolidated Local Plan and other published Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Local context

The former Royal Hotel site is located within the centre of the Stow Conservation Area, where the Townfoot road meets the

A7. The Stow Conservation Area is centred round the remains of the Old Parish Church and the remains of the Bishop of St Andrew's manor house that is also known as the 'palace'. The Conservation Area is built-up of a range of different styles and types of properties. These range from the small, single storey cottage type to the grand baronial Town Hall.

The now demolished, former Royal Hotel dated from the mid 19th century and its neighbours that are located to the east of the site are of a similar age.



Figure 1- Local Context



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Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good road access • Site located within settlement of Stow • Good transport to Galashiels and Edinburgh • Revitalise and regenerate the centre of Stow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for archaeology to be present on site • Consideration of adjacent listed buildings • Adjacent properties with windows looking into redevelopment site • Pedestrian and vehicular access points into site.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a new frontage onto Townfoot road • Potential to enhance the historic Townfoot frontage of the Stow Conservation Area • Creation of a contemporary rear • Potential for retail or commercial premises to be accommodated on ground floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to provide permanent support to gables of adjacent buildings • Mix in village character - risk of new development lacking local distinctiveness • Retention of existing brick and stone boundary walls.

The Site

Although now demolished the original property was a collection of two two-storey buildings and a single storey building. Each of the two storey buildings were three bays wide and were built to the back of the footpath. Within the single storey part of the building was a pend that allowed access to the rear. The single-storey part of the property was also built to the back of the footpath.

Figure 2 - Former Buildings Onsite



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The unlisted former hotel itself was built of whinstone (painted white) with sandstone dressings (painted black) and a slate roof. Prior to its demolition, the condition of the former Royal Hotel had grown worse and detracted from the Townfoot frontage in particular and from the Stow Conservation Area in general. In addition the property had also been included within the Buildings at Risk register.

The site has been allocated within the Consolidated Local Plan 2011 as a mixed use site with a site capacity of 11 units. The Local Plan sets out requirements that the site should be developed for mixed use and that the design and layout should conserve and enhance the character and amenity of the Stow Conservation Area to the south.

Figure 3 - Site following Demolition of Buildings



Direct access into the site is achieved from the Townfoot road. Whilst the site is generally flat there is a minor change in level in that the site rises slightly towards the north of the site. Neighbouring properties are the most part traditional and range from single, storey and a half and two storey; and are finished in natural stone, harl and slate for the most part.

A mix of uses currently surround the site although residential use predominates. The listed red sandstone building adjacent the site to the east along the Townfoot road houses the village post office. The village public toilets are located in the north west part of the site. It is intended that these will be relocated elsewhere within the village.

Views from the site are generally limited to the immediate surroundings, although glimpses of longer distance views outwith the village can also be achieved.

Figure 4 - Buildings in the Vicinity



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Opportunities and constraints

Opportunities

- The site is large enough to accommodate a scheme which would be in character with the Stow Conservation Area
- Potential to enhance the historic Townfoot frontage
- Provide village centre housing
- Creation of a contemporary rear
- Revitalise and regenerate the centre of Stow
- Potential for retail or commercial premises to be accommodated on the ground floor
- Solar gain should be exploited where possible.

Constraints

- The residential amenity of existing residential properties within the vicinity would need to be protected
- Archaeological implications of new foundations / services
- Need to provide permanent support to the gables of the adjacent buildings
- Changes of levels across the site
- Consideration of adjacent listed buildings
- Adjacent properties with windows looking into the site
- Retention of existing brick and stone boundary walls
- Pedestrian and vehicular access points into the site.

Figure 4 - Details found in Stow



Figure 5 - Images from around Stow



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Development Vision

The aspiration is to develop a high quality mixed use development that is responsive to the local context. Careful consideration is required of the relationship between the new development and the existing properties within the Conservation Area.

The vision will be achieved by:

- The development must create a positive, attractive Townfoot frontage, with overlooking to public spaces where possible. The **building frontage** should define the key entrance and arrival into the site, creating a definitive **sense of place**
- An overly engineered access should be avoided and shared surfaces should be considered. **Appropriate lighting** should be incorporated into the Development. This would be discussed in detail at the planning application stage
- Properties to range from **single to two storey in height** to avoid new building dominating over the existing village
- References for material ranges between **sandstone, whin stone, harling and slate** however, that should not restrict the use of good innovative design
- On the site of the **former hotel the replacement building**, must be **no higher than two storeys** in height and should reflect the qualities of the former hotel itself. In relation to building materials, ideally the recovered building materials from the site should be reused particularly along the Townfoot frontage and along the entrance into the site (i.e. the west elevation). **To the rear** of the building, a more **contemporary approach** may be acceptable provided that the overall design of the building works well as a single entity.
- On the **site of the Old Meeting Room** (i.e. to the immediate west of the former hotel along Townfoot), any new build must be **no higher than a storey and half** in height and should take reference from the neighbouring property (229 Galashiels Road) in respect to the design and finish. There is potential for a small **area of open space** relating to the new unit on the corner where Townfoot meets the Galashiels Road/A7. The open space must be enclosed by a **stone boundary wall** of the same finish as that of the neighbouring boundary wall along the Galashiels road.
- In terms of **layout, orientation, construction and energy supply**, appropriate measures must be taken to maximise the efficient use of renewable energy and resources and the incorporation of **sustainable construction techniques**
- Row housing would **minimise energy demands** (minimisation of heat loss for example)
- The **density** of the development should take reference from the other properties within the settlement. The design of the properties should relate to the design of existing properties within the vicinity in respect of **scale, massing, and form**
- Use of appropriate styles of **high quality boundary treatment** that respects the surrounding area such as dry stone walls in order to help frame spaces, define public and private spaces and contain car parking for both residents and visitors. The proposed development should also consider provision of waste collection facilities
- Retention of the **existing brick and stone boundary walls** within the site
- All **vehicular access** to the proposed new units onsite (both residential and commercial) should be achieved via the Townfoot road. It will be necessary to have **pedestrian access** into the site from both Townfoot and from the Galashiels Road/A7
- The development to be connected to the public sewer.

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Development Vision



Submission Requirements

- Design statement
- Energy statement
- Context study: demonstrate an understanding of context
- Site photos: highlight key views and how the design will respond to these 3D visualisation material: sketches or computer generated visualisations showing the development in context.

Development Contributions

(This list is not necessarily exhaustive).

- Affordable Housing - The requirement for affordable housing should be met in line with Local Plan Policy H1. Currently a developer contribution of 25% (based on SPG Affordable Housing approved 2011) would be required from this site
- Education - A financial contribution towards Education facilities within the catchment area would be required
- Waverley Railway Contributions - The site falls within the area where contributions towards the Waverley Railway Reinstatement will be required
- Green Space - A contribution towards green space within the area will also be required.

Figure 6 - Images within the settlement



Adjacent Bus Stop



Green Space in Stow



Stow Primary School

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