

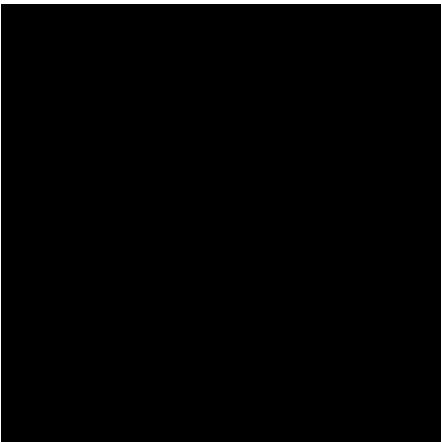
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 January 2019 11:14
To: localplan <localplan@scotborders.gov.uk>
Subject: LDP2 Preferred Option MINNIE 003 - Innerleithen - OBJECTION

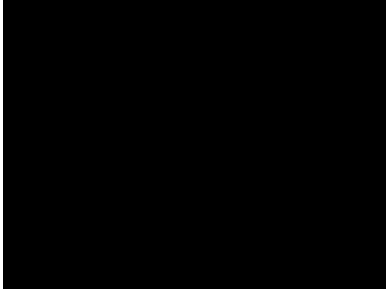
Dear Sirs

Further to my concern over the proposed 'Preferred Option' for the LDP2 here in Innerleithen which directly impacts us, I am hereby submitting my full, written objection to this proposal for your urgent consideration.

Please refer to my letter attached.

Yours sincerely





Mr Charles Johnston,
Planning and Economic Development,
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters,
Newtown St. Boswells,
TD6 0SA

28th January 2019

LDP2 Preferred Option MINNIE 003 - Innerleithen - OBJECTION

Dear Sirs

Further to my assessment of the proposed 'Preferred Option' for future planning development as indicated in the 120 page MIR report and LDP2 map, I would like to express my objection to this proposal.

On the forward to this report Councillor Tom Miers says,

"The report will be subject to public consultation both by direct submission and via public events. The responses received will all be considered within the new Local Development Plan. Do come along to these events if you can or contact the Council directly with your ideas and thoughts."

On page 7 - Figure 2: **Preparation of Main Issues**, after the 'Call for Sites', is "Public Exhibitions & Public Workshops", neither of which have been brought to my attention as someone who will be directly affected. Has consultation taken place with the Health Centre and the local sheltered housing properties agency who are also directly affected?

As far as I am aware there have been no 'events' to discuss or consult with anyone and the community council only posted their notice a few weeks ago which is hardly time for reflective consultation!

Last time the plan was reviewed I served on the local community council and the lesser plan was rejected on the grounds that the site was inappropriate for major development and would have serious implications for the Health Centre and residents in the Tweed View / Angle Park and Traquair Road localities.

These genuine concerns appear to have been over-ruled and now the plan has been extended to cover the **entire field** at MINNIE 003, almost doubling the footprint area of the original proposal which is currently used for sheep and cattle grazing; is the official site for the local bonfire and fireworks in November; used as a utility space for travelling shows, and last but not least, a precious recreational space for residence from the whole community at a time when we are losing more and more free land to housing developments.

The Community Council also created a Community Poll in January 2019 on their Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Innerleithen.org.uk/>) which showed residents were **62% AGAINST** these proposals (see Fig 2 at foot)

Here then are a list of my objections followed by my preferred vision for this space.

HEALTH & SAFETY

This proposal if adopted into the plan, will indicate a major disregard of these earlier objections and potentials, creating a serious Health & Safety concern re traffic flows through a quiet residential cul-de-sac at Tweed View onto the **very busy A72** main arterial road, or through a quiet residential sector made up primarily of elderly residents within an affordable homes allocated area, onto Traquair Road which narrows significantly at the local hotel in one lane due to resident and trade parking.

The thought of perhaps a hundred cars or more!! trying to access the A72 from Tweed View is frankly horrific, since with only seven properties, it already can be a challenge to cross the junction-head with cars regularly following in line-formation at rush hour and peak times. There is also a blind summit at the co-op which makes it very difficult to see when turning right from Peebles into Tweed View, particularly with cars speeding as they leave the co-op area heading west, or not slowing down sufficiently from the Peebles side into the 30mph limit.

We have already had to enforce a 40mph limit on the western boundary due to the excessive number of crashes (some serious) and even have had cars ending up in the field you are proposing!

The pavement and walkway was described to me by a police officer after one such crash as “not something he would advise people to walk on” as cars have frequently come off there, by crossing the road and into the barrier opposite, in part due to a bad alignment in the bend at Caerlee which can cause vehicles to literally bounce across the road into the paths of oncoming traffic when they hit the kerb stone.

The road also narrows there on the bend just before the 30mph limit and large lorries and buses have collided in the past causing serious tail-backs on the A72 at best, (restricting access and exit from Tweed View!!) or worse, road closures resulting in ALL traffic being diverted onto the very inappropriate back roads on the B709 to Traquair and then onto the B7062 past Traquair House.

Those roads are already being used as rat-runs from an expanding Peebles, with several recent incidents of crashes and driver’s wing mirrors (including my own), being smashed due to excessive speed and poor driving. May I suggest you consult with **Peeblesshire Road & Traffic Watch** Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2058434387578588/>) and see recent posts, [REDACTED]

The very thought of HGV’s, delivery vans and a large increase in private vehicles, turning into or out of Tweed View onto the A72 or from Traquair Road, adding to these hazards, is beyond reasonable and especially if the A72 gets closed due to accidents and happens about two or three times a year on average.

The Scottish Government’s document “**Designing Streets**” talks about the need for connectivity and safer layouts with an emphasis on visual quality.

I suspect Tweed View already meets those objectives however lorries with low turning circles will inevitably need to stray onto the opposing side of the main road. OK for the occasional bin lorry or delivery but not as a regular occurrence and particularly not at peak times.

Any mix of industrial and housing developments together would surely breach “**Designing Streets**” guidelines.

In severe weather, Tweed View can be almost impossible to get out of and large accumulations of snow are allowed to develop as we are not a Priority route.

Last winter we had several vehicles stuck and abandoned or needed to be dug out. The hill makes it very difficult to get any momentum and you just sit there with wheels spinning, or if you get to the top, hoping and praying no-one is coming as you can't afford to stop!

The proposed plan may look ideal in blissful summer weather, but trust me its not an easy junction to get in or out from at the best of times and as my wife is a childminder, parents often park on the proposed access point which would be problematic for them if they couldn't.

ENVIRONMENT

The Scottish Government's guidance notes in **Development Planning 6 2013** sites the following:-

- (page 3 - para 10) "...all interests should be engaged as early and as fully as possible....This hasn't happened yet!
- (page 4 - para 13) ..."The **Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009** sets out that public bodies (which includes planning authorities) must, in exercising their functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of climate change targets set out in the act"
- (page 4 - para 14) - under Section 72 of the Act, ..."that all new buildings avoid a specific and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions from their use."
- (page 8 - para 32) - also requires regard to, "any regional transport strategy, **approved flood risk management plan**, finalised local flood risk management plan, river basin management plan, etc etc.,
- (page 16 - para 67 states, "The MIR should identify the planning authority's preferred options **but also needs to consider reasonable alternatives** where these are available"

I will spare you any more analysis of the report but need to add why I think this proposal will adversely affect the Environment and impact on the Community i.e. those living around it who are most directly affected.

Firstly, the housing **need** for Innerleithen is described as 'Light' and yet we already have three fields set aside for development at Kiklands, **SINNE 001** and **AINNE 004**, and a brown field site between Tweed View and the new Cooperative store **T13B**. Developers are currently building a fairly large mixed housing site at the old Ballantyne's Mill **MINNIE 001** and are hardly flocking to build on the others at the present time.

Perhaps in another 5 years things will change and we can revisit and reassess then?

Whilst the MIR indicated housing of 50 units and business park, it is unlikely a developer will be happy with that and will almost certainly seek to max-out the available space creating high density housing. On this assumption, everything I have outlined is likely to double and get worse by a factor of two.

Secondly, any development will affect the environment by adding yet more greenhouse gases from perhaps a hundred (100) or more boilers, regardless of efficiency, motor exhaust fumes from perhaps two hundred (200) additional vehicles (based on two cars per household) which are unlikely to be all electric or hybrids and will add to overall congestion on our already busy roads.

Speed restrictions are increasing and journey times getting *longer* as a consequence.

Thirdly, the water table from the river Tweed has, during persistent heavy rain, definitely risen in the past few years and especially since Cardona was built which has subtly altered the course of the river.

It is only since 2010 that I have seen that particular field **flood**, something it never did before since I came here in 1996. When the water table rises it could adversely affect foundations of all dwellings and buildings in the medium to longer term, especially if more tarmac, paths and cobble brick roads and paved driveways are introduced.

Where will the run-off water go when the water table is high?

Fourthly, Innerleithen doesn't have a sewage works and so all this new effluent will have to be transported with major disruption to existing infrastructure in order to upgrade the system.

Fifthly, the river Tweed is still regarded as the “Queen of Rivers” for its salmon and fresh water trout. Large-scale development on our narrow stretch of water could result in effluent or other chemical waste accidentally entering the river ecosystem. I have witnessed this already in the form of a smelly oily discharge at the confluence of the rivers Tweed and Leithen. No-one owned up to that one.

The river is currently very low for this time of year and last summer remained very low, reducing flow to areas where one could practically walk across it rather than the usual chest-high depth. These may be seasonal variations but they reflect the nature of how the river ebbs and flows, rises and falls, in accordance with the prevailing weather patterns and as global warming effects change, more rain and downpours in the future may well result.

Sixth, as the A72 is a main commuter route to Edinburgh and the West of Scotland from the eastern Borders towns of Galashiels and Selkirk, the combined effect of all these housing development plans can only make our roads more challenging to drive on, plus difficult to maintain and manage. It seems like an idyllic place to live until commuters are faced with severe weather, as we do get quite frequently, especially in winter.

The environmental impact of more and more cars commuting flies in the face of Environmental Policy for sustainability and Traffic Policy for efficient road use. We need to encourage less travel for commutes not encourage more.

Finally on the point of vehicles, as petrol and particularly diesel cars are forced off the roads under new Government legislation, the attractiveness and fuel cost implications of living and commuting from this base may well actually diminish and with no new industries based in the vicinity, it is unlikely such an expansion will ever be needed as present plans should be sufficient well into the future.

THE ALTERNATIVES

I am not against sensible, sustainable and organic development, based on **evidence-based** NEED. The simple fact of the matter is that we are being expanded without the evidence of new industry and jobs in the area or a high level of young people desperate to live here or existing dwellers desperate to move in-situ. Let's not repeat the early mistakes of Cavalry Park in Peebles!!

As your report states, there is a growing elderly population, I am heading that way too, and we do need to bring or retain young families to help provide the taxes for local and National government, however that comes at a cost.

A cost for maintaining or expanding our primary school and health centre in particular and more bin collections (not less), to accommodate all these new members of the community which, if all are built upon, could add up to a thousand extra souls, half of which have already joined us.

How long will it be until we are told that we can no longer hold our street festivals on the High Street due to pressures from traffic and lose the character of what makes our town so special?

Will the Health Centre have to partition-off its wonderful panoramic window space from its single story, pavilion building to prevent residents overlooking the consulting rooms and waiting area as Dr Watt told me at the last review and asked me to raise his concerns then?

Will the council provide the resources for these and all the maintenance costs that accompany them?

There are OTHER areas of land that could be developed.

New Housing and housing areas have already been established as mentioned above, however the Industrial Park area at Tweedbank Ley should probably not have been developed as those houses now occupy land designated originally for that purpose.

TWEEDBANK FARM next to Tweedbank Ley is no longer a farm and could be developed with easier access when space runs out at the present park. However I am sure those residents would also be against any future development too.

CADDONBANK POOL - comprising a former tip and open field next to the railway path. Could it accommodate new housing or future development?

HOWFORD CROSSING & OLD AIRSTRIP has fields there between the main road and the Railway Path with easy cycling commute into town, Cardona and Peebles.

COMPROMISE & VISION cont

COMPROMISE & VISION

Rather than developing the entire field, at least keep any development small and in line, west of Tweed View and not in front of it. That area as I have said serves the community in many ways already. Perhaps it could be developed into a **'Community Space or Garden'** with trees and paths and green areas. We could engage the community to design it and consult on their wishes.

Thus creating a space where people can relax or walk their dogs whilst still protecting the Health Centre from prying eyes and preserving the current visual features of the developed environment.

I earnestly hope you will take into consideration the points I have raised which are shared by my neighbours who also are directly affected.

Finally, I am enclosing an amended map of your proposals showing the impact and accident black spot on the A72 on the western boundary and urge you to consult with **Police Scotland** about the road traffic implications from any future development and access onto it.

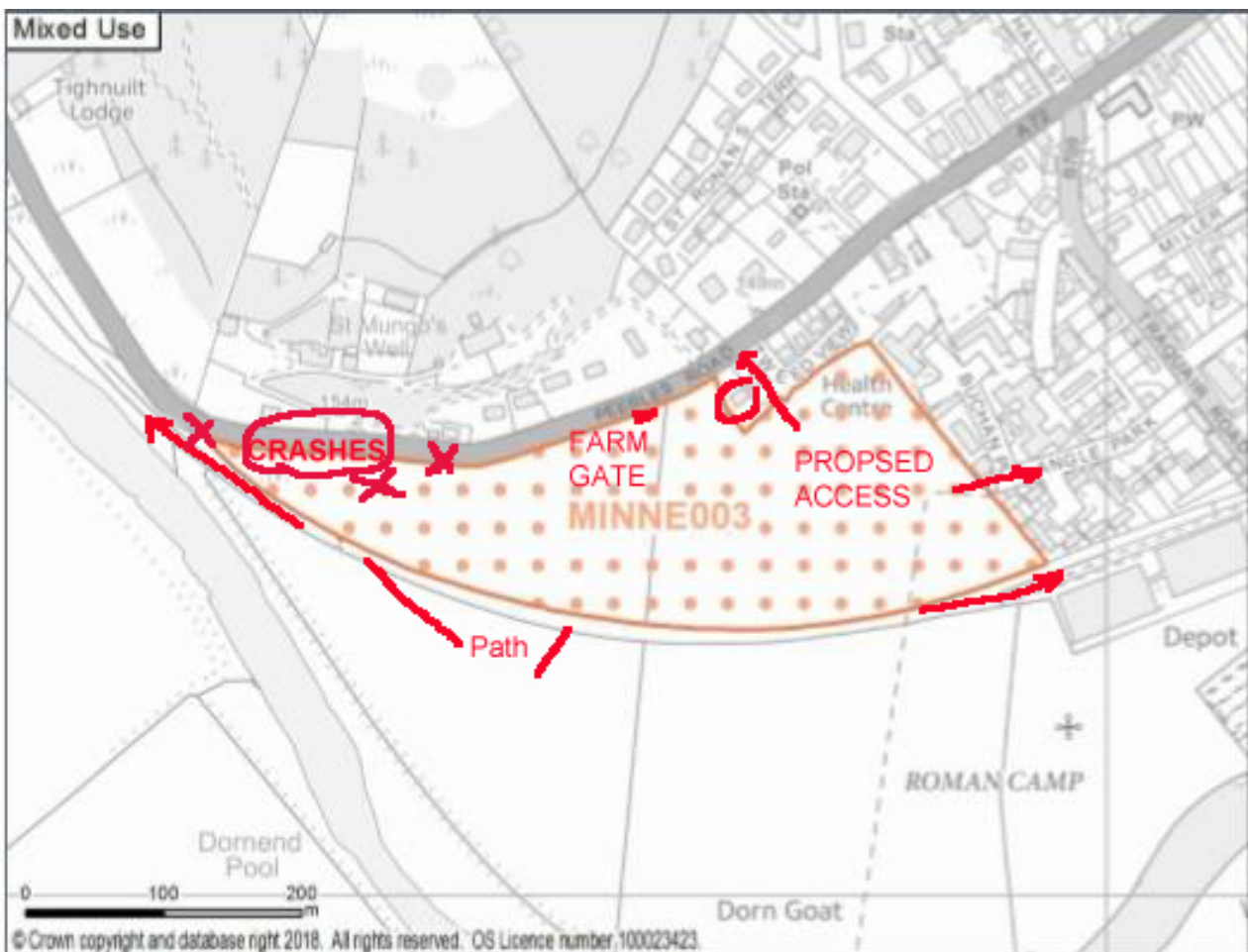


FIG 1 - AMENDED MAP SHOWING ACCIDENT BLACK SPOT

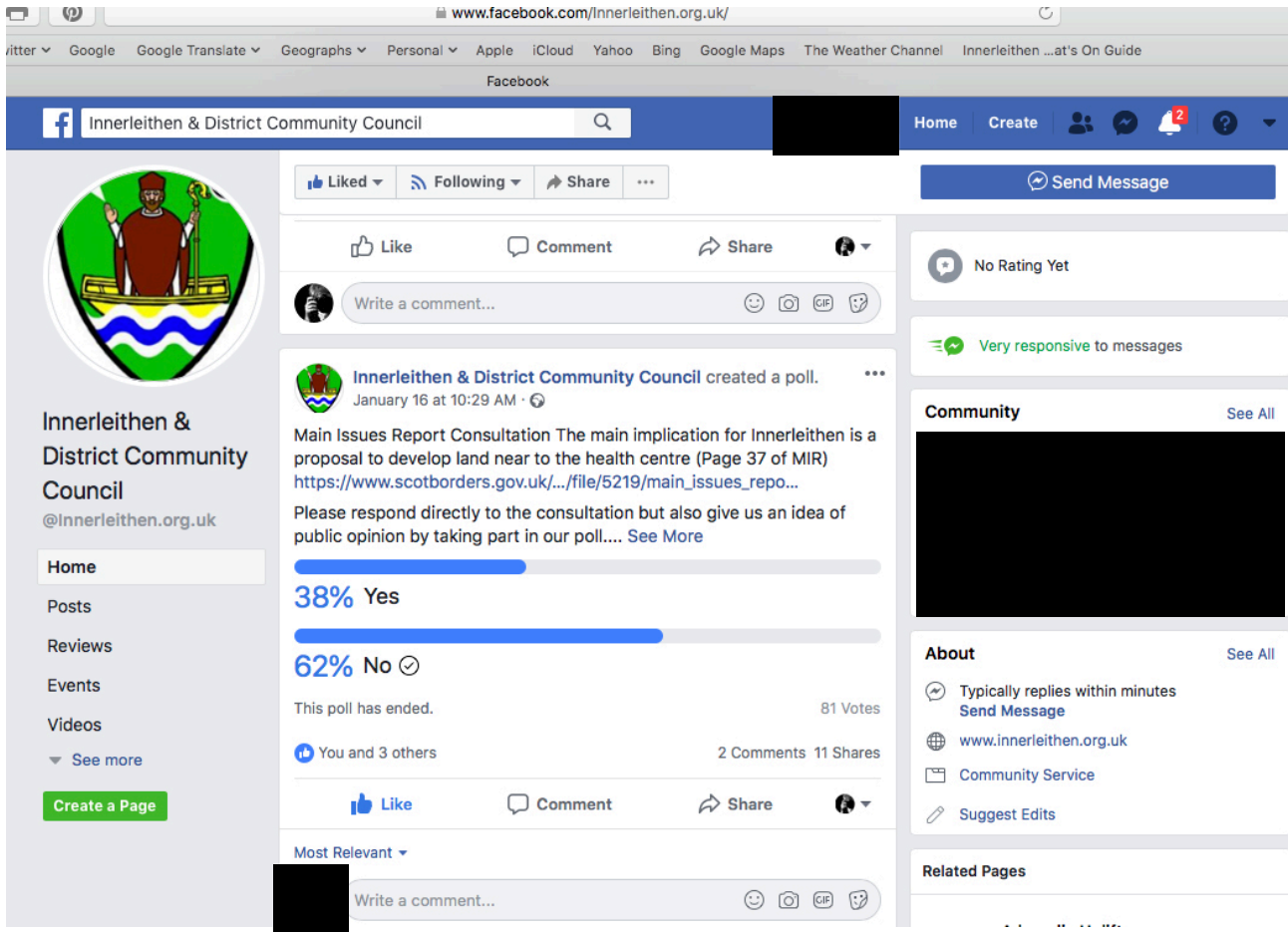
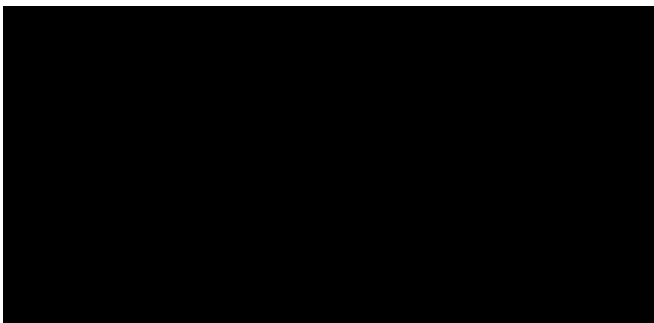


FIG 2 - COMMUNITY POLL SHOWING OPPOSITION TO LDP2 PRIORITY PROPOSALS

Yours sincerely



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 February 2019 12:49
To: [REDACTED]@scotborders.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: SBC - MIR Consultation

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email.

I haven't got access to detailed maps so can only highlight the areas on Google Maps as per the screen shot below.

I hope this is helpful and your department will be able to source more detailed OS maps for their purposes.

[REDACTED]

