

Response ID ANON-7TG7-FASQ-M

Submitted to LDP2 - Main Issues Report

Submitted on 2019-01-30 17:37:06

Data protection

About you

Are you responding as an: individual, organisation, or an agent acting on behalf of a client?

Individual

Individual

What is your name?

Individual name:

██████████

What is your address?

Address line 1:

██████████

Address line 2 :

██████████████████

Address line 3:

Town/City:

██████████

Post code:

██████████

What is your contact number?

Individual Phone No:

██████████████

What is your email address?

Individual email:

██████████████████

Vision aims and spatial strategy

Question 1

Q1 Agree aims LDP2:

Two very important Aims that have not been included in the MIR. These are:

1: "Ensure that adequate service provision to support new development is in place prior to increasing demand for services by the building of new houses or business units."

I see that as a fundamental of good planning. Failure to do so equates to an absence of planning.

2: "New housing provision must take account of the predicted change in the age demographic of the Scottish Borders (Table 2 in the MIR), by promoting land for a specialist development for the most senior age groups. This should be purpose built, in an attractive location, close to the railway and hospital."

I believe that SBC are missing opportunities presented by the ageing population. Table 2 shows that the vast majority of the population increase will occur in the 65+ age categories. Many (although obviously not all) people within this category are financially in the wealth-ier category of the population. This presents a real business growth opportunity which the SBC should be planning for. Although many people in the more senior age categories will still be relatively active, they will be planning for their future by looking to down size into attractive good quality houses/flats close to facilities. In many other countries (eg New Zea-land), there are specific developments for this age category, with housing ranging from non supported, to full nursing support (residence can move to more assisted housing within the complex when and as required). Within these developments there are join facilities such as swimming pools, gyms, medical practice, cafe, library etc. I believe that if such a retirement village was built in the right location in the Scottish Borders, many, if not all, of the pro-posed housing developments identified in the MIR would not be required as existing houses would become available for the <65 age group, by the downsizing of the +65 age. I believe that the SBC are missing a real opportunity here. As well as addressing the housing and well-being needs of the Scottish Borders, the suggested retirement village has other

benefits. Medical and social services should be easier and cheaper to provide as these can be located within the complex. Social isolation of the older population can be lessened through providing places for gatherings. It also represents a significant economic and employment opportunity. As such, it should be targeted to an area where more employment opportunities are required. A site should be identified adjacent to the railway where such a village could be established. Being close to the railway would make the development particularly attractive as it would enable ready access to Edinburgh for an age group where car ownership may be less. The development would also benefit from being close to Borders General Hospital.

I really believe that if SBC were to identify a suitable, attractive site for such a high quality development it could lead the way within Scotland for a revolution in how coping with an aging population is viewed and tackled.

In addition to the two points above, I highlight the following Aims already in the MIR which I fully agree with and to which I will refer later in my response.

Para 3.3 it is stated that 'it is not anticipated the LDP2 will require a significant number of new houses'

Para 3.5 states 'the LPD must seek to encourage diversification of the rural economy by supporting appropriate economic development and tourism in the countryside'

Para 3.6 states 'the built and natural heritage are major component parts of the attractiveness of the Scottish Borders which must be protected and enhanced.'

and 'LDP2 must continue to ensure new development is located and designed in a manner which respects the character, appearance and amenity of the area'

Para 3.7 states 'The council must continue to promote and investigate ways to address climate change issues....There is a continuing need to reduce travel, greenhouse gas emissions as well as energy consumption

3.8 summary includes

' Promote economic development opportunities along the railway corridor' and

' Maximise and promote the Scottish Borders tourism potential and build strong visitors economy'

' Protect and enhance the built and natural environment'

Growing our economy

Question 2

Q2:

Q2 upload:

No file was uploaded

Question 3

Settlement business allocated:

Galashiels/Tweedbank/Melrose area - See answer to Question 1 regarding the suggestion for a Retirement village development.

Upload Q3:

No file was uploaded

Question 4

Business Use Towns:

Upload Q4:

No file was uploaded

Question 5

Land delivery effectively:

Question 6

Agree?:

First of all I would say it is very difficult to comment on proposals for 'mixed' land use as there is no indication as to what the split between industrial/housing would be. I am assuming that the unit figures in the MIR for the 'Mixed use land' apply to the housing element as there are no unit figures given for the single use 'Business/industrial' land-use sites.

I strongly disagree with the two proposed areas Site Reference MESH1001 and MESH1002. The unit number for these two preferred sites alone is greater than the 'preferred sites' for the whole of the rest of the Borders. Development of these two sites is out of character for the area, would be detrimental to the development of the Glentress area as a major tourist draw, would contribute significantly to more traffic on an already busy road, would increase flooding risk for the housing and fields below the road, and would pose problems regarding sewerage disposal from the sites.

I see both these proposals as in conflict to many of the Aims identified within the MIR:

Paragraph 3.5 MIR 'the LPD must seek to encourage diversification of the rural economy by supporting appropriate economic development and tourism in the countryside'. The proposals for these two sites will detract from the tourist potential of the area and hence its economic development by blighting the visual approach to Glentress and the views from within the forest southwards. Glentress has to date been sensitively developed as a highly successful tourist destination, not only for mountain bikers but also for walkers and people visiting the immediate area near the car parks and cafe. The whole of Peebles benefits

from this. Tourists will be put off the area if it is part of an urban sprawl. There are an increasing number of other mountain biking areas with which Glentress is competing and the proposed development will only make it a less attractive option amongst these.

Paragraph 3.6 MIR 'the built and natural heritage are major component parts of the attractiveness of the Scottish Borders which must be protected and enhances' and 'LDP2 must continue to ensure new development is located and designed in a manner which respects the character, appearance and amenity of the area'. Development of these two proposed sites does not protect nor enhance the natural heritage of the area. It does quite the opposite. Nor does the location of the proposals respect the character, appearance nor amenities of the area and in particular the small settlement of Eshiels. Indeed it is totally out of character.

Paragraph 3.7 MIR 'The council must continue to promote and investigate ways to address climate change issues....There is a continuing need to reduce travel, greenhouse gas emissions as well as energy consumption'. The development will increase very significantly the flow of traffic along the A72, an already very busy road. Significant work would be required to accommodate turning into/out of the development. In addition many residence of houses built would be commuters to Edinburgh, further congesting the A703. Non of this reduces travel or greenhouse gas emission.

Paragraph 3.8 MIR Summary states objectives to 'Promote economic development opportunities along the railway corridor'. The only proposal for development which directly relates to this is a 2.5 ha site in Galashiels (BGALA006) which is absolutely trivial. So the MIR fails on this objective. The summary also includes an objective to 'Maximise and promote the Scottish Borders tourism potential and build strong visitors economy' and to 'Protect and enhance the built and natural environment' As already stated above I believe that development of the two sites at Eshiels will be a negative influence on both these objectives, by making the area less attractive for tourists through urbanisation.

The MIR makes little mention of ensuring that developments can be accommodated by the existing infrastructure. In this regard I would state that the existing services within Peebles, particularly the schools, health centre, roads, parking and sewerage facilities are already stretched and in places at breaking point. We know that the High school will not be replaced in the near future. It is neither realistic nor equitable to put 80% of all the preferred 'units' for development for the whole of the Borders in these two plots.

As a resident of the area, I also oppose development of the sites on the basis that the developments would:

■ Have a negatives effect on the amenity of the current residence of Eshiels, through increase noise, loss of dark skies, impact of buildings on our open aspect, and a general change in character of the area.

■ Be overbearing, out-of-scale and out of character in terms of its appearance compared with the current small settlement at Eshiels .

■ Result in the the loss of existing views from many of the current houses in Eshiels (I appreciate that this in itself is not ground for objecting however this would impact adversely affect the residential amenity of people living here, which I believe are reasonable grounds).

Upload Q6:

No file was uploaded

Planning for housing

Question 7

Housing agree?:

No, I do not agree with the preferred options for additional housing sites.

In the following response, I am assuming the 'unit' figures given for 'mixed use' sites relate to houses. I have also estimated unit figures, as there are non given in the report, for the 'long-term' sites using average units per hectare for other sites in the report. On this basis more than 80% of ALL the 'units' proposed in the MIR for 'Preferred sites' are located in Peebles and its immediate catchment area (1110 units in Peebles v 228 for the rest of the Borders). If 'Alternative sites' are included, this drops to 64% (1185 units in Peebles v 652 for the rest of the Borders). How can the Council justify this when the services in Peebles are not there to support even the existing developments already in the system? There has been significant investment in new schools recently in the Borders. But not in Peebles High school. Now this MIR proposes building upwards of 1000 new houses in a town where the replacement of a creaking High school has been kicked into the long grass. The roads in Peebles cannot cope with more traffic but plans to build of a new bridge lie, as with the High school, in the long grass. The medical centre in Peebles is extremely busy and, with an aging population, will only get busier even with no further houses. If further development is to occur in Peebles it must go hand-in-hand with investment to increase services either before or, as a minimum, concurrent with housing development. And this must be demonstrated to be the case.

I am sorry to say, but I find the extreme weighting of putting proposed development in the Peebles area as opposed to the rest of the Borders really difficult to interpret in any way other than being vindictive against Peebles. It is so extreme. My only other explanation is that having commissioned a report (Western Rural Growth Area: Development Options) for this area alone, subconsciously this has skewed the thinking of the people writing the MIR report to go along with the areas identified in the commissioned study. Why were no similar external studies commissioned for other areas in the area (for example along the line of the new railway)?

With regards to other areas, please see my suggestion for a Retirement Village. I can only give a few suggestions relating to possible locations for this but attached are three areas that I think may be worth investigating further. I am sure a contract to an external organisation would be able to come up with suitable areas close to Galashiels/Melrose/Tweedbank.

Upload Q7:

No file was uploaded

Question 8

Housing countryside:

Upload Q8:

No file was uploaded

Question 9

Agree removed housing :

No. I do not see the need for this. I think that these identified areas should remain rather than finding new ones.

Supporting our town centres

Question 10

Core Activity Areas:

Question 11

Berwickshire supermarket:

Upload Q11:

No file was uploaded

Question 12

Develop contrib town:

Yes where there is long term evidence of difficulty attracting development in town centres.

Delivering sustainability and climate change agenda

Question 13

Support alternative option:

Yes I support the policy but would add that this emphasises the need for development sites to be immediately adjacent to towns rather than at a distance from them even if the distance is relatively short. Proposed development sites MESH1001 and MESH1002 will, by being located a short distance from Peebles itself, result in significantly more of the most polluting type of road miles - those done before engines are fully warmed up. Mile for mile these are far more polluting than longer journeys.

Question 14

National park:

No, I don't support this.

Upload Q14:

No file was uploaded

Regeneration

Question 15

Agree redevelopment:

Upload Q15:

No file was uploaded

Settlement Map

Question 16

Oxnam settlement:

Question 17

Core frontage Newcastleton:

Planning policy issues

Question 18

Agree amendments appendix3:

Any other comments

Question 19

Other main issues:

I feel that the issue of ensuring that infrastructure matching development has not been dealt with enough, with too little, if any, analysis of what additional services and infrastructure is required in areas that are proposed for significant development.

I feel not enough thought has gone into housing developments in the Borders outwith the Tweeddale area. In this regard the whole report is almost absurdly weighted towards the Peebles area.

Also please see comments for question 1.

I think there is a glaring lack of policy on planning how to deal with, and benefit from, the predicted major shift in the age demographic for the Scottish Borders. The increasing fitness of people in the +65 age group in comparison to the past, and the fact that that this is also one of the wealthiest age groups means that there are real and significant opportunities to develop an economic growth boom for an area by the establishment of a retirement village. This age group should not be seen as being only poor and frail. A significant and growing number of the +65 age group are fit and healthy but also want to plan for their future. Thus any such village needs to provide and promote the availability of recreation and social facilities within a highly attractive development for living in. The increasing fitness of people in the +65 age group, in comparison to the past, and the fact that that this is also one of the wealthiest age groups means that there are real and significant opportunities to deliver an economic growth boom for an area by the establishment of such a retirement village.

Landowner details**Have you submitted any site suggestions in this consultation?**

Yes

If yes, please confirm the site and provide the landowner details (if known) for each site you have suggested.:

I have tried to submit some but the link in the Browse feature did not seem to work. I will therefore email these separately with the reference number provided by the system.

I am afraid I do not have landowner information for the sites I suggested near Melrose/Galashiels.



