CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK TWEEDBANK

SITE OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- The location of the Borders Railway terminus at Tweedbank should act as a catalyst for the rejuvenation of the Business Park at Tweedbank, which is of high strategic importance in the Central Borders.
- The Business Park is highly visible from the A6091 which enhances the marketable profile.
- The site benefits from transport links and connectivity between the railway terminal and major public and private employers within the area and wider community such as the Scottish Public Pensions Agency, Scottish Borders Council, Borders General Hospital, the Agriculture, Food and Rural Communities Directorate and the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency.
- Transport links and connectivity to nearby tourist attractions, such as Abbotsford House, Melrose Abbey and Scott's View.
- Tweedbank is located within the Borders Strategic Green Network which consists of a network of green spaces and green corridors through, within and around settlements, linking open spaces within settlements to the wider countryside. They can assist in enhancing the biodiversity, quality of life and sense of place of an area. Furthermore, the settlement is surrounded by land protected by the Countryside Around Towns policy (EP6) of the LDP which aims to prevent piecemeal development, which would detract from the area's environment, and to avoid coalescence of settlements, thereby retaining their individual character.
- The sites are located within attractive boundaries whereby the structure planting undertaken when the estates were constructed in the 1970s and 1980s is now well established. A survey of all trees has been undertaken to inform possible pockets of land with development potential. These areas are identified within the Development Vision (SG Plan 2). Consent would be required to undertake any works to trees protected by the Tree Preservation Order (see SG Plan 5). The survey can also inform an ongoing future maintenance programme.
- Energy Efficiency—potential for energy generation on the site as well as opportunities for heat network development from waste water.

- The incorporation of a limited level of retail provision at the 'gateway' into the business park to serve both visitors to the area and users of the business park.
- The existing Tweedbank Sports Complex is located adjacent to the south western boundary of the Industrial Estate and includes an astroturf pitch, a 400m running track/athletics field and indoor bowls facility. There is an opportunity to improve access to this facility from both within the village and the business park.
- The implementation of a Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) Scheme offers flexibility to businesses and encourages investment and rejuvenation of the existing business and industrial sites.
- Improved pedestrian and cycle links within the settlement as well as key linkages between the railway terminus and key existing employment sites such as Borders General Hospital and tourist sites such as Abbotsford House/Visitor Centre.
- Utilities generally follow the existing road network, the retention of the basic infrastructure alignments would avoid costly utility diversions. There is an aspiration to bring the southern part of the estate road, which is currently private, up to an adoptable standard.
- The development of a more integrated approach to public transport by linking buses to the new rail service. This would require coordination between the bus and rail operators.
- The site is visible from the A6091 to the south, for both vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists. Tweedbank is located within a sensitive landscape with the Special Landscape Area abutting the settlement to the south and east and the Eildon Hills feature as a prominent backdrop. The opportunity should be taken to reinforce this edge, which is currently defined by a post and wire fence, with appropriate planting, most likely with hedging.
- The industrial estate is suffering from an ageing and increasingly substandard building stock and the size and layout of both the buildings and external yard areas are not consistent with modern development requirements. This current situation offers an opportunity for the regeneration of the site, to provide a fit for purpose business park with improved architectural design and green infrastructure. There is the potential for higher densities of built form (than existing) on site.

CONSTRAINTS

- The location of significant gas and electrical infrastructure adjacent to the western edge of the Industrial Estate site. These high voltage supply lines are laid below ground and preclude development at this location.
- Careful consideration of potential impacts on the Special Landscape Area adjacent to the Business Park to the south (See SG Plan 4).
- Existing trees within the Industrial Estate are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (see SG Plan 5). These trees have been the subject of a Tree Survey which is available as a background paper. It is intended that the Tree Preservation Order will be reviewed/amended.
- Development must protect the potential future extension of the railway line (See SG Plan 5).
- Since the opening of the Borders Railway in September 2015, passenger numbers have far exceeded those initially expected. As a result the railway terminal car park has regularly operated at capacity, with overflow parking encouraged temporarily in the adjacent Industrial Estate. Whilst it is accepted that passenger numbers may decrease after the initial surge in interest in the new Railway line, the parking levels provided are being assessed by Scotrail. A newly developed Business Park may potentially create more demand in the future. Additional provision may be required.
- The eastern most part of the Business Park is located within the National Inventory Battlefield—Battle of Darnick. This also adjoins the southern boundary of the Business Park (See SG Plan 5).
- Tweedside Park is immediately adjacent to the western most boundary of the Eildon and Leaderfoot National Scenic Area (NSA). The special qualities of the NSA must be given due consideration when assessing development proposals.
- There are limited social amenities within Tweedbank currently. The village offers a primary school, Gun Knowe Loch, a local shop, hairdressers, and bar/restaurant within the village centre but these are located a distance from the Business Park. There is also a Community Centre and an all-weather sports complex which are detached from the other facilities.

- Any future extension of the railway line would impact upon some of the existing access links within the Business Park. This must be considered in respect of layout and access points.
- The Business Park is within varying ownerships which could act as a constraint when seeking to apply an overall scheme to improve the environment.
- The Council's Local Transport Strategy (2007/08) and more recently the Main Issues Report relating to the forthcoming Local Access and Transport Strategy (July 2015) identify a potential new road configuration at Tweedbank which would include the provision of a new road bridge at Lowood, as well as or as a replacement for the existing Melrose Bridge (B6374). This would improve connection between Tweedbank and Melrose Road (B6374) in Galashiels removing pressure on the trunk road network (A6091) and on Abbotsford Road (A7) into Galashiels.

CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK
TWEEDBANK

DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR THE CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK

DEVELOPMENT VISION

The aspiration is to develop a high quality business and industrial development that is not only sympathetic to the sensitive local context but is a flagship development for the Central Borders.

The Development Vision should:

- Optimise the opportunity for investment
- Take advantage of the new investment of the railway
- Create a setting that will encourage investment
- Be sensitive to the landscape setting
- Benefit Tweedbank as a whole as well as the individual land uses
- Be low carbon

KEY PRINCIPLES

A Focus initial development linked around the railway terminal/adjacent entrance to the Business Park to create a clear high quality gateway when accessing the Business Park from the railway terminal

B Create a people focused public space around this gateway to allow a safe pedestrian environment which is not car focused

C Development to follow a clear perimeter urban block arrangement with frontages placed onto defined building lines facing onto pedestrian friendly streets with internal parking courts behind

D Place individual 'signature' buildings at key locations to mark entrances and key routes

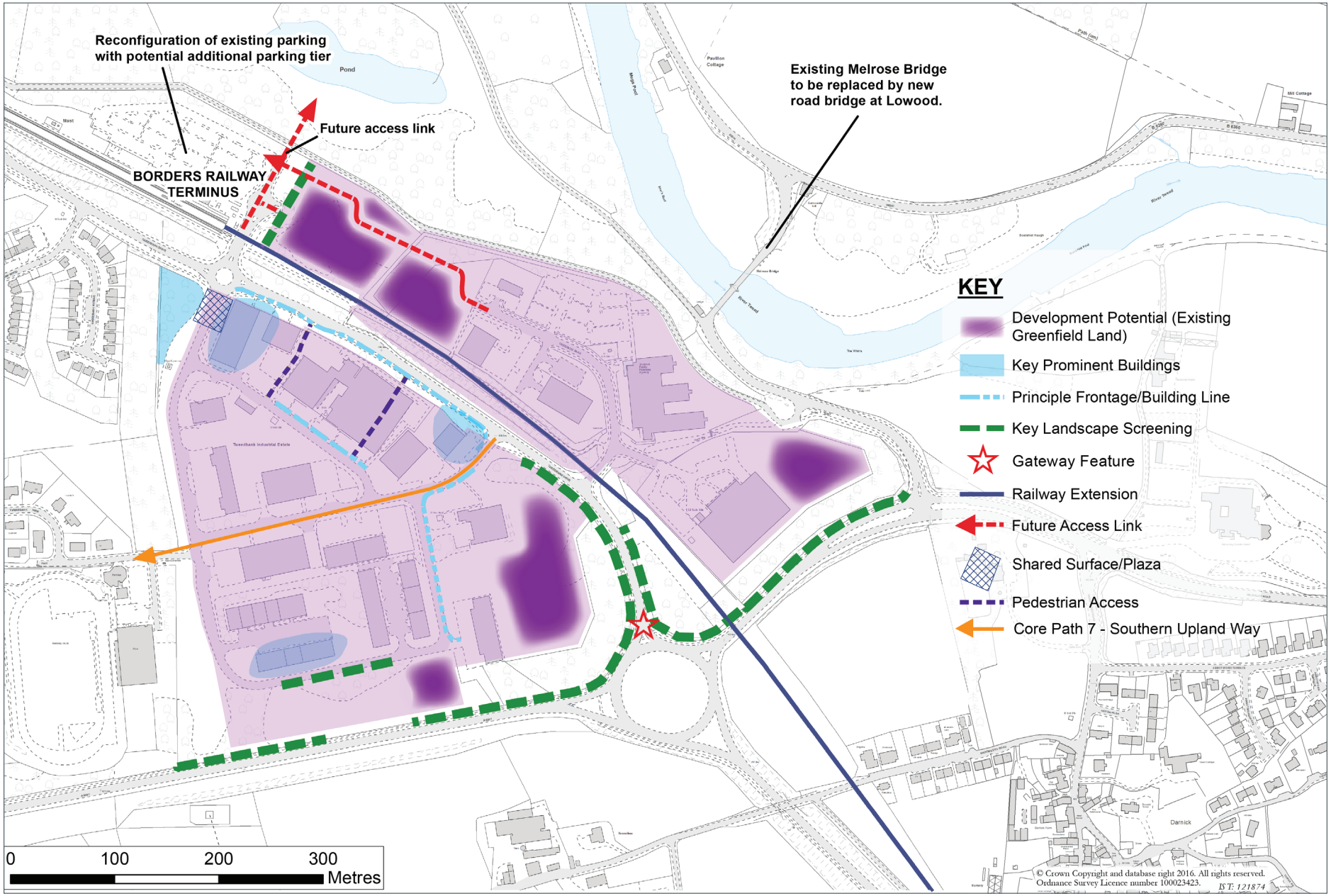
E Develop a suite of sensitively designed and located office buildings along the southern edge of the site, visible from the A6091 to mark and promote the business location to passing traffic but with a high quality landscaped edge

F The need for an overspill car park for the railway terminus to be monitored. This could be accommodated within the existing boundaries of the railway terminus, partly through the restructuring of the existing layout and/or the provision of a further tier

G Create a low carbon built environment and infrastructure that will reduce carbon emissions

H Maintain a high quality landscape framework, improving upon and maintaining, where appropriate, the existing structure planting taking into account the sensitive landscape context

SG PLAN 2—DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK



CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK TWEEDBANK

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

LDP SITE REQUIREMENTS

The LDP 2016 sets out the following in relation to the site allocations:

TWEEDBANK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE (zEL39):

- This is a strategic safeguarded business and industrial site as defined in Policy ED1.
- Development on land immediately adjacent to the A6091 should be of high quality and design within the Use Class 4 use. Careful consideration would require to be given to landscaping, particularly along the southern edge of the site, in order to ensure an attractive edge to the business and industrial site.

TWEEDSIDE BUSINESS PARK (zEL59):

- This is a strategic high amenity safeguarded business and industrial site as defined in Policy ED1.

SITE EAST OF RAILWAY TERMINAL (MTWEE001):

- Access via existing Tweedside Park (zEL59) to the east and from zRS1 to the west.
- Appropriate planting required on mutual western boundary with railway station.
- New site to be formed for mixed use purposes along with the restructuring of the existing landholdings within Tweedbank Industrial Estate.
- It is expected that the site would be developed for commercial mixed use. Housing would not be appropriate on this site, given it's proximity to the Railway Station (zRS1) and the business and industrial land to the east (zEL59).

LANDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS

- Existing trees within the boundaries and on the perimeter of zEL39 are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. These trees were planted when the estate was first established and provide screening from Tweedbank Drive and the adjacent A6091 road as well as from the Melrose roundabout to the east. Further, trees to the north west and south west edges of the estate screen it from existing residential development and community facilities to the west.
- A survey of the trees has been undertaken and identifies potential areas for development, subject to the need for consent to undertake any work to the protected trees.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- In respect of the overall Central Borders Business Park, good, careful design at the outset will minimise the total energy demand for the lifetime of the development and encourage better standards of energy efficiency. Design considerations for the development will help to increase the efficiency of energy and water use. Siting of developments, their orientation and design should be considered to help reduce the energy demand of new buildings in addition to the building standards energy requirements. Opportunities for including an element of on-site renewable energy generation and water recycling will be encouraged, where it will be in accordance with the development parameters set out in the SPZ Scheme (See Part II).
- There is capacity for a local energy network by way of a district heating system. Buildings and open spaces should have renewables generation capacity. Heat recovery technologies would be key (water and air source) as well as photovoltaic and solar thermal. The potential for heat recovery from waste water should be explored.

VILLAGE CONNECTIVITY

- The main vehicular route through the village providing access to the sites is Tweedbank Drive, linking with the A6091 at either end of the village.
- Pedestrian connectivity within and through Tweedbank varies in definition and quality. A number of core paths and promoted paths lead through the village.
- 'Core Path 189: National Cycle Network—Route 1' runs adjacent to Tweedbank Drive and provides a key link between the railway terminus and beyond.
- Core and promoted paths within and adjacent to the sites must be maintained and enhanced where possible.
- The potential for new walking and cycling routes should also be considered where applicable.

SG PLAN 3—VILLAGE CONNECTIVITY

EXISTING UTILITIES

- Utilities generally follow adopted or road network routes. In order to avoid costly utility diversions, it is expected the existing basic infrastructure alignments will be retained. Of particular note in relation to considering future development, is the location of significant gas and electrical infrastructure adjacent to the western edge of the Industrial Estate. These high voltage supply lines are laid below ground and preclude development of buildings at this location.

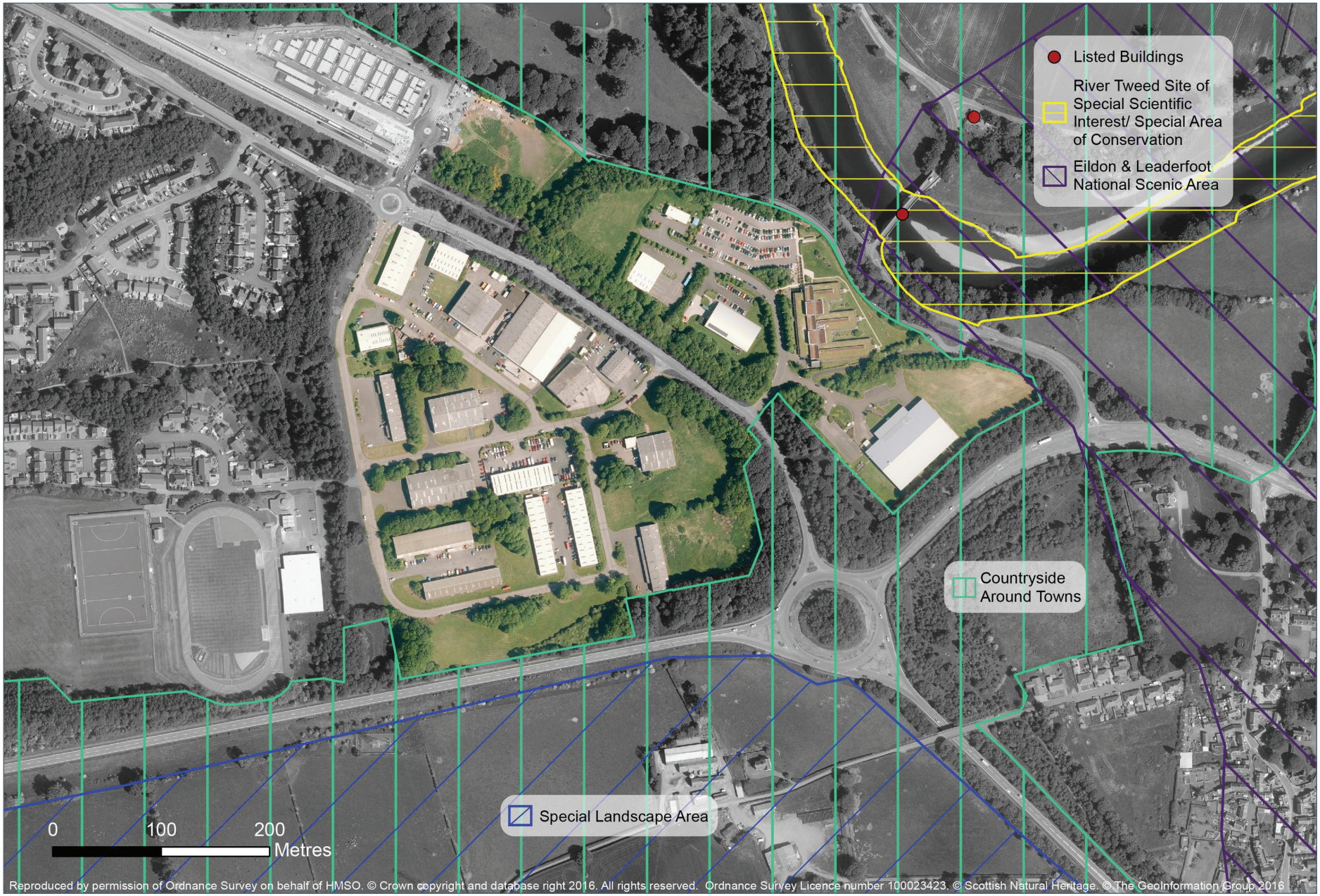
TRANSPORT & ACCESS

- The potential future extension of the railway beyond it's current terminus at Tweedbank must be considered. This would require the exclusion of development along the potential line as well as the reconfiguration of the entrance into the existing railway station car park. A Rail Route Protection Study (2015) undertaken by Mott MacDonald on behalf of Scottish Enterprise found that the extended railway line could extend under the existing road network at Tweedbank Drive/Tweedside Park which would suitably maintain access at this location.
- A sympathetically designed footbridge would be required at the railway terminal to link with Tweedbank Drive in order to maintain a suitable access to the Business Park and beyond. An alternative access from the existing railway terminus into the Business Park to the east would require to be provided.
- A Transport Statement, undertaken by Mott MacDonald in August 2016, recommends that a holistic approach be applied to development of the area, including consideration and implementation of transport measures to facilitate sustainable access, which in turn will support the framework vision of this SG and Simplified Planning Zone Scheme. A summary of the key recommendations is contained within Appendix 3 of Part II of this document.
- Road and footpath connections to the adjacent road and path network are essential to encourage onward journeys to/from the railway terminus as well as important links within the business and industrial sites.
- The Border Weaver 'hop–on hop-off' bus service provides a useful link between the Borders Railway Terminal, local communities and visitor attractions. There appears to be an opportunity for a car/bike hire facility within the vicinity of the terminal to provide further opportunity for onwards journeys, particularly in view of the National Cycle Network which runs through Tweedbank.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Tweedbank is located within the Borders Strategic Green Network which supports economic growth, tourism, recreation, the creation of an environment that promotes a healthier-living lifestyle, and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, and will have the potential to improve the quality of the water environment, promote flood protection and reduce pollution.
- The eastern most part of the Business Park, off Tweedside Park, is within the National Inventory Battlefield of the Battle of Darnick. There would potentially be requirement for archaeological work within this area. The existing woodland defining the south eastern corner of the Industrial Estate is also within the National Inventory Battlefield. Whilst it is not considered that development within this area would be appropriate, any restructuring of the woodland would require to take this matter into account.
- Any issues relating to surface water flooding would require to be considered and addressed.
- Development must allow for the collection of waste, in line with the principles of Scotland's Zero Waste Plan and the Council's Waste Management Supplementary Guidance.
- Views into the Business Park must be considered, both in terms of the visual prominence of buildings and uses as well as any potential impact upon the sensitive landscape setting. Careful consideration must be given to the fleeting views into the southern part of the Business Park from the A6091.
- Sympathetic design is required in view of the location of the Business Park adjacent to the Special Landscape Area (SLA) and National Scenic Area (NSA).

SG PLAN 4—EXISTING EXTERNAL SITE FEATURES & CONSIDERATIONS



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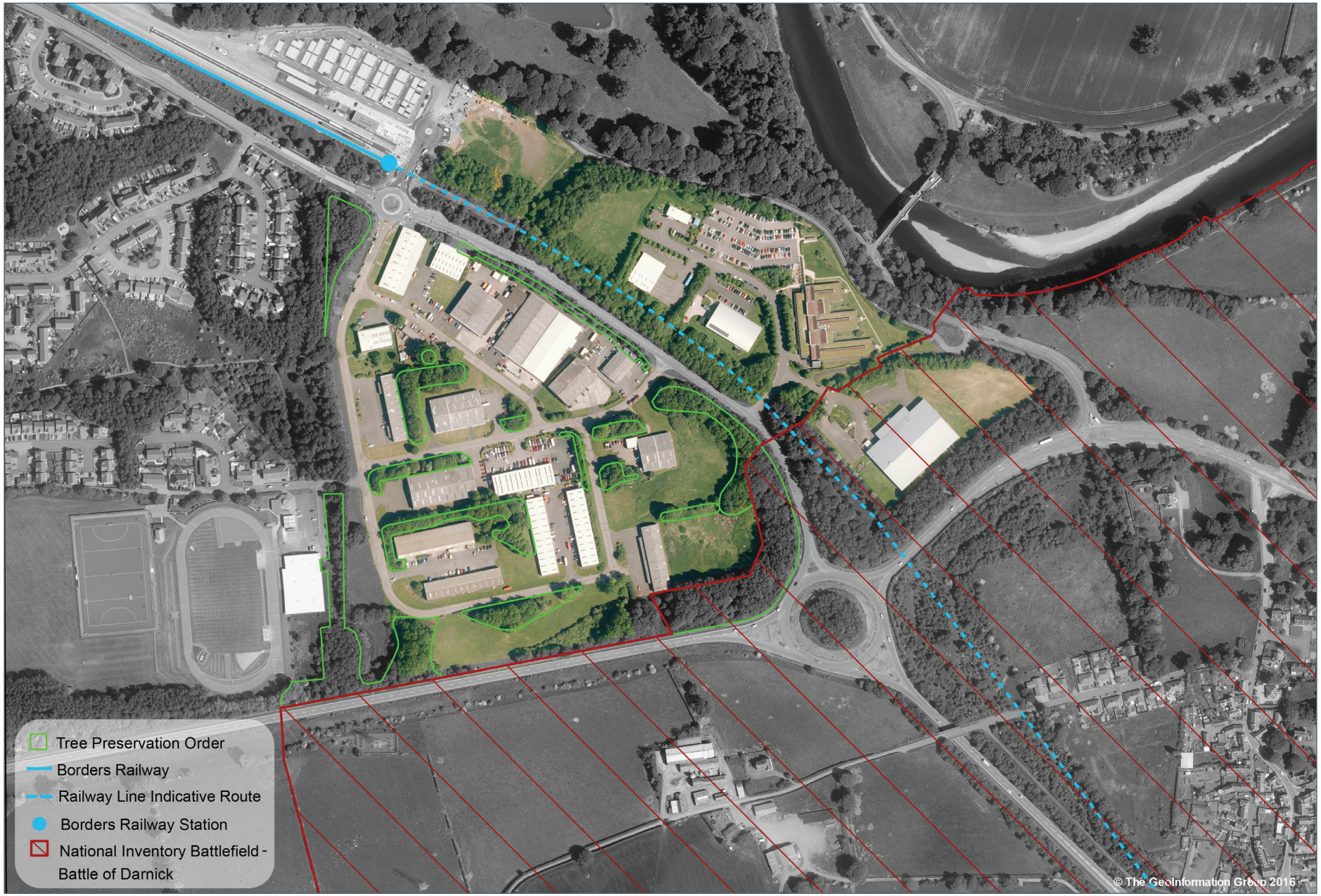
SG PLAN 5—EXISTING INTERNAL SITE FEATURES & CONSIDERATIONS



CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK
TWEEDBANK

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Part II of this document sets out certain instances in which development is permitted under the Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) Scheme without the need for planning consent, subject to conditions and parameters.

WHERE THE SUBMISSION OF A PLANNING APPLICATION IS REQUIRED, THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS MAY REQUIRE TO BE SUBMITTED:

- Context study demonstrating an understanding of the local context
- Site photos: highlighting key views and how the design will respond to these
- 3D visualisation material: sketches or computer generated visualisations showing the development in context
- Design statement
- Energy statement
- Landscape plan
- Planting and landscape management scheme
- Drainage Impact Assessment - looking at impact on the catchment area and waste and surface water drainage solutions
- SUDS scheme for treatment of surface water run-off
- Transport assessment/statement
- Ecology assessment plus species management plan, where necessary
- Archaeological evaluation and appropriate mitigation measures where necessary
- Developer contributions

CENTRAL BORDERS BUSINESS PARK
TWEEDBANK

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