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**UPDATED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE:  
PLANNING BRIEF – FORMER BORDERS COLLEGE,  
GALASHIELS**

**Report by Chief Planning & Housing Officer**

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**PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**1 February 2021**

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**1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of updated Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in the form of a Planning Brief for the Former Borders College site on Melrose Road, Galashiels. If approved, the Guidance will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Planning Brief would replace a Brief previously adopted in 2009 for the site.
- 1.2 The existing Planning Brief was prepared some time ago and is out of date on a number of component parts. This updated SPG will ensure reference to up to date policies and site requirements to be addressed which will help provide relevant guidance to enable the satisfactory development of the site. Colliers requested that the original Planning Brief be updated as they are currently marketing the site and are eager to encourage the redevelopment of the derelict site and provided an initial draft.
- 1.3 It is proposed that the updated Supplementary Planning Guidance is subject to public consultation for a period of 6 weeks. Following consultation, it is intended that if substantive comments are received a report will be brought back to the Planning and Building Standards Committee to seek final agreement.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Planning and Building Standards Committee agrees to:**
  - a) **Approve the document as updated Supplementary Planning Guidance in the form of a Planning Brief (Appendix A) to be used as a basis for public consultation.**
  - b) **Delegate authority to the Chief Planning and Housing Officer to approve the final document as Supplementary Planning Guidance if there are no substantive comments arising from the public consultation.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Former Borders College site on Melrose Road in Galashiels is allocated within the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2016 as a redevelopment site (zRO202). The site is 2.1ha and allocated under Policy PMD3: Land Use Allocations. Policy ED5: Regeneration seeks to encourage redevelopment of redevelopment allocations for a variety of uses including housing, employment or retailing which will support the opportunity of bringing such land back into productive use and to enhance the surrounding environment.
- 3.2 The site is currently occupied by the now redundant former Borders College campus. The Updated Planning Brief relates to a smaller part of the allocation as part of the site is now in use. The residual site area now available for development is 1.7ha. The Live Borders office building lies to the west of the site beyond the Queens Leisure Centre, having formerly been part of the site covered by the original planning brief.
- 3.3 The site lies immediately east of Galashiels Town Centre. It is located on the south side of Melrose Road (B6374) on an area of generally level ground. Residential properties rise in levelled tiers up the steep slope to the north. There are a range of different buildings on site. On the western part of the site the dominant property is the two-storey stone built former Galashiels Academy Building, which has been subject to extension and alteration at its eastern extent. This building is not a listed building. To the rear is a single storey modern building currently occupied by a short-term tenant and to the west is the Queens Leisure Centre. On the eastern side of Langhaugh Lane is the Category C Listed Thorniedean House. To the south of this building are the former college 'technical workshops'.
- 3.4 The Council has prepared this updated Planning Brief for the site to create a development vision, address potential constraints on the site and encourage good quality redevelopment in accordance with sustainability principles which fit with the townscape of the settlement and integrates with its landscape surroundings. The Planning Brief will provide guidance to any developer of the site or any other interested party and will be a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 3.5 The main changes to the brief are as follows;
- The policy context has been brought up to date;
  - Live Borders offices are excluded from the site as these are now in established use;
  - The development guidance has been updated to current standards;
  - Reference to the preference to retain existing non-listed buildings has been removed.

### **4 IMPLICATIONS**

#### **4.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

#### **4.2 Risk and Mitigations**



**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jacqueline Whitelaw can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Jacqueline Whitelaw, Planning and Regulatory Services, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 01835 825431, Fax 01835 825071, email [eitranslationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:eitranslationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk)