

Statement

The current site is classed as ED1 an application for pre-planning enquiry (Planning Pre-Application Enquiry 16/00568/FUL) was submitted with the response that a temporary structure would be preferred so that the land can be returned to Industrial Land and enabling the Council to retain some control over the longer term planning of the site.

The xmod Ltd has further plans for the site, a pre-planning enquiry for an extension to form additional storage space on the grass area and modernise the currant warehouse. SBC Enquiry Reference 19/00220/PREAPP (Attached)

The Catering truck will be located at one fixed area on the grass north of the Station Yard building and will not be required to be moved around the site to protect the grass as previously stated. (IMG 1-6) Freeing the grass area from sterilising the entire site and maintain a reasonable distance between the catering truck and neighbouring residential property.

The site has been granted a three year street trader's licence for 7am to 10pm, where planning permission would be needed to open for more than 28 days. However this comes with limitations for employment, each staff member requires an assistant street traders license at a cost of £68 and 4 to 6 weeks to process per applicant. Another drawback is the reliability of opening days, where regular trade can not be consistent under a street traders licence.

Currently the site has been in our ownership for nine years and over this period the grass area has lay empty and although pre-planning enquiry existing, there is no plans for the area marked for the catering truck area. Referring to the 'policy ED1: Protection of business and industrial land 2. District Sites (b) The alternative land use is considered to offer significant benefits to the surrounding area and community that outweigh the need to retain the site in business and industrial use' (Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan, 2016) providing the unused area for outdoor seating and eating would promote and enhance the local economic stability and growth essential to future availability of the area while creating job opportunities.

Under the 2016 Local Development Plan, the site zoning under Policy ED1 is classified as a "District". This application is providing a site where there is a market failure situation as the town centre has no adequate space for visitors with bikes within the Town Centre boundary. This would also be a complementary to the industrial area and the wider community as they can co- exist.

The congestion on the towns centres streets where bikes are propped against walls and doorways. (IMG 7-11)

The Co-Op and The Allotment retail units are both located out with the safeguarded town centre boundary (ED3) with the Co-Op clearly taking the vast amount of trade serving meal deals, baked good etc over long opening hours. What difference are we to them offering food to eat outside the town centre boundary?

With a total 744 Sq M of retail space outside the town centre between the 2 shops that sell food. We feel that having 2 out of town shops located at one area of Innerleithen has given them a monopoly on visitors entering the town.

We are offering a completely different type of catering service, an outdoor seating area is not bound with walls and ceilings, an outdoor area that is weather dependent, serving up delicious light bites and drinks. We are offering somewhere to rest and eat for travelling by foot, bike and wheeled traffic that are using the multi-use Tweed Valley Railway Path that connects Peebles with Walkerburn, passing along Traquair Road as well as many other trails and routes.

A safe place to dismount off the street and road, to relax from their journey and refuel beside their bike before setting off on their next journey, dogs are welcome to rest in the grounds to re-dehydrate whether they are covered in mud or not and children are able to play freely in the grounds with a designated area for the under fives to play with a mud kitchen, playing with pots and pans, a sand pit and activity table to explore making play dough and various sensory activities. (IMG 12-13)

A place to mingle and connect with locals, walkers and bikers with informed display boards of what the Tweed Valley walking and cycling trails have to offer while supporting local businesses within the Innerleithen and surrounding areas displaying their information and where they can be found, Wi-Fi will be available to customers. The area will be inclusive to all with buggies and wheelchair access with picnic tables to support customer's needs

We are taking a big risk in outdoor catering but we feel that supporting our outdoor walkers, bikers and families that face all kinds of weather conditions it is an investment worth supporting. Planting and seating has been added to enhance the area create an enriched, colourful and relaxing feel for all to enjoy. (IMG 14-18)

With the increased visitors numbers when events are held within the area the town has very little capacity for such high demand. With events such as the Enduro World Series and the Scottish Downhill Association (SDA) the town needs more infrastructures to facilitate such events, with visitors voicing their concerns with regards to lack of food within the Co-op, no tables available in the Traquair Arms Hotel, lack of accommodation and transport between towns running up, during and after the events, visitors were left to pursue provisions and facilities further a field and disappointed with the lack of amenities and resources.

With project such as Go Tweed Valley, Destination Tweed and the proposed mountain bike innovation centre. Innerleithen will need more capacity for visitors and infrastructure. If we are unable to adapt and support the growing interest we risk failing to take advantage of the opportunity, where other communities will be willing to grab the chance with both hands. The outdoor space we are proposing would be a small solution for visitors and locals to relax and enjoy, refuel and be informed and hopefully the community and local business will be willing to invest in supporting this growing demand.

With reference to Visit Scotland: Theme 4 Food and Drink; '2.63 Many areas across Scotland will find it difficult to affect a growth step change if they do not develop and support quality catering outlets, at all pricing levels. Investment in local or regional quality catering provision particularly in Scotland's conference, exhibitions and events sectors is vital to the ongoing growth and support of this sector.' (Visit Scotland Tourism Development Framework for Scotland, 2016) taking note that investment is needed furthering that "the local representation of food and drink should be an integral part of future tourism development strategies and in the context of the Framework Refresh, any supporting infrastructure.' (Visit Scotland Tourism Development Framework for Scotland, 2016)

Planning Permission was not shared with the Community Council, nor mentioned at any Community Council Meetings; therefore the community was unaware of the catering truck application and thus excluding them from voicing their views. Gordon Bain was able to discuss the catering truck and seating area during a recent Community Council Meeting on the 18th October 2021 and received supporting comments with no objections noted during the meeting, a number of members were willing to give support in writing.

In review of the objection lodged please note that Station Cottage and Station House had no objections to the planning application.