

Galashiels Community Campus

Pre-Application Consultation Report

March 2021



Applicant and Client

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1.1 INTRODUCTION



The Scottish Borders Council ('The Applicant') proposes to build a new community campus with associated hard and soft landscaping, covered tennis facility, plant housings and refuse store, external sports provisions, improvement to the landscaping of the surrounding parkland including new play provisions and car parking facilities at the site of the existing Galashiels Academy, Elm Row, Galashiels, TD1 3HU.

This statement has been prepared by jmarchitects as lead consultants and 'Agents' for the Planning Application, with input from the wider Design Team.

1.2 THE DOCUMENT

The proposed development constitutes a major application in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1977 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and as such requires a statutory period of consultation, feedback and review.

This document sets out to record the process and actions undertaken by the Applicant to meet the requirements of the consultation, to record the feedback received and the steps taken to address the issues raised.

A Proposal of Application Notice (henceforth referred to as PAN) for the proposed development was sent by jmarchitects to Scottish Borders

Council Planning Department and validated on 24th May 2021.

A copy of the Proposal of Application Notice and its attachment are included in Appendix A.

1.4 CONSULTATION PLAN

At a meeting with Scottish Borders Council Planning Department on 6th July 2021 jmarchitects identified and agreed the format, content and timetable for consultation. The proposed format for consultation was as follows:

- Advert in Borders Telegraph and Southern Reporter week commencing 5th July 2021 announcing the launch of both the physical and virtual public exhibitions and signposting where to find them, identifying the dates for two live and interactive online consultation sessions and outlining how to obtain an invitation to these and notifying the public of how to make comments on the proposals.
- A virtual public exhibition of the proposals, online from Thursday 8th July until Thursday 19th August 2021
- An unstaffed physical public exhibition of the proposals at the Galashiels Transport Interchange from Friday 9th July until Thursday 19th August 2021.
- A live and interactive online public consultation session on 28th July 2021 between the hours of 6pm and 9pm
- A live and interactive online public consultation session on 4th August 2021 between the hours of 2pm and 5pm
- A live and interactive online consultation session with the Community Councils notified as part of the PAN Application on 11th August 2021 from 6pm till 7pm.



1.3



SCOPE OF CONSULTATION

The consultation process was extensive and was planned and managed to ensure that the greatest number of consultees could be reached and provided within an appropriate forum despite the social distancing restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Following the success of the Informal Community Consultation, held at the beginning of 2021, it was agreed that the same online platform would be used for the PAN Consultation as the community were already familiar with this virtual environment. The virtual consultation space hosted the 'traditional' consultation boards as pdfs along with two videos describing the vision and ambitions for the project, an annotated site plan, extensive FAQs and an online feedback form. The website was launched on the 8th July 2021 and remained live for 6 weeks (the website and information is still accessible however after the 6 week period the ability to provide feedback was disabled). This virtual information was also complimented with an unstaffed physical exhibition of the consultation boards at the Galashiels Transport Interchange.

The consultation process also included the following two-way live events:

- A live and interactive online public consultation session on 28th July 2021 between the hours of 6pm and 9pm
- A live and interactive online public consultation session on 4th August 2021 between the hours of 2pm and 5pm
- A live and interactive online consultation session with the Community Councils notified as part of the PAN Application on 11th August 2021 from 6pm till 7pm.

The live events were planned and advertised for set times to ensure that members of the public knew when project staff would be available to provide information. All attendees were provided with the opportunity to give feedback and ask questions during the events.

Due to the online nature of the events, an overview of the project was presented, led by jmarchitects. Following the presentation there was an opportunity for participants to ask questions to the project team about the development with the presentation slides playing on a loop during the remained of the consultation session to allow participants to view the scheme at their leisure.

2.1



Site location in Edinburgh

2.2 PUBLICITY

In addition to the circulation of the PAN, an advert for the public consultation was placed in the Public Notices section of two local newspapers, the Borders Telegraph and the Southern Reporter, in the editions published week commencing 5th July 2021.

Parents and carers of current pupils at Galashiels Academy were notified of the PAN submission by means of an email and a Groupcall, which highlighted to them that there would be a public meeting in July and that consultation material would be available prior to this.

There was also a social media campaign run by Scottish Borders Council Comms Team to promote the consultation.

A copy of the newspaper advert and social media posts are included in Appendix B.

2.3 CONSULTATION FORMAT

The PAN Consultation Boards accessible on the virtual consultation space were identical to those pinned up in the physical public exhibition at the Galashiels Transport Interchange and the presentation given during the live and interactive consultation events shared the same content as the boards re-formatted into a presentation. This content covered the following:

- Proposed Site Plan
- Proposed Building Accommodation
- Proposed External Landscaping Strategy
- Design Development Diagrams
- Sketch Views of Proposed Building
- Internal CGI Views of Proposed Building

A copy of the PAN Consultation Boards is contained within Appendix C.

2.4 PROGRAMME OF CONSULTATION

The consultation period began on 24th May 2021 and concluded on 19th August 2021, a total period of 12 weeks.



QUER

2.5

QUERIES AND COMMENTS

During the live and interactive online public consultation session, members of the Design Team and Scottish Borders Council project team were available to describe the proposals and answer any questions or concerns about the design.

The comments were collated along with any response received via the feedback form and email and reviewed by the project team to establish the main issues raised.

2.6 ATTENDANCE

The live and interactive online public consultation sessions were all well attended and the analytics from the virtual online public exhibition also showed a good number of visitors. Unfortunately we do not have any data on the number of people who visited the unmanned public exhibition at the Transport Interchange. Details on the attendance numbers can be found below:

Online Public Exhibition 8th July - 19th August 2021 387 Unique Visitors

<u>Live and Interactive Online Public Consultation Session 1</u> 28th July 2021 6-9pm 14 Members of the public

<u>Live and Interactive Online Public Consultation Session 2</u>
11th August 2021 6-7pm
14 Members of the public
5 Elected Members

Live and Interactive Online Consultation Session - Community Council
4th August 2021 2-5pm
8 Community Council Members

7 comments were also received via the feedback form available on the online consultation space and via the dedicated project email address.

Feedback was collated from the various consultations and grouped into 3.4 Traffic Impact on Surrounding Roads the following main issues. Although these do not all necessarily relate directly to Planning, we felt it was important to highlight the key issues raised nevertheless.

During the two live online public consultation sessions there was a along Livingstone Place and the surrounding area. number of references made to the Information Community Consultation (ICC) and the process and decisions made during and following this. The attendees were reminded that following the conclusion of the ICC a report was taken to Council on 13.05.21 and the overall site strategy taken forward to this PAN Consultation was unanimously supported. Attendees were also reminded that the PAN Consultation is a consultation on the proposals shown and not a consultation on the process.

The main points are summarised as follows:

3.1 Managing and Minimising Disruption During Construction

Concerns were raised regarding disruption during the construction period. These concerns made reference to a number of parties including to the pupils and staff of Galashiels Academy, the adjacent care home and sheltered housing complex as well as surrounding residents.

More specific concerns were raised regarding construction site access, the accessibility of the park during construction and the safety of pupils and the public.

3.2 Preservation and Protection of Trees

In addition to the heavily wooded areas in and around the proposed site there are a number of trees of significant landscape value in close proximity to the construction zone. There were concerns raised about how these trees would be preserved and protected during construction.

3.3 Area of Archeological Interest

When viewing Scott Park on Google Earth, there is a circular landform visible within the site boundary and the questioned was posed from some members of the public as to whether this land form may have any archeological value.

Concerns were raised regarding what impact the co-location of a secondary school, enhanced provision, swimming pool and replacement Queens Leisure Centre would have on the traffic levels

3.5 Improvements to Scott Park

There was a high level of interest from the public as to what improvements would be made to Scott Park as a result of the development and how these would benefit the community in the long term.

3.6 EP11

Planning Policy EP11 of The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan applies to the proposed site for the new Community Campus and there were a number of consultees who were concerned about the relevance of this policy.

3.7 Life Expectancy of Facilities

Questions were posed as to the life expectancy of the proposed facilities.

3.8 Sports Facilities

An interest was expressed for enhancements to be made to the proposed sports facilities, these included; an increase from the proposed 6 court to an 8 court games hall, a moveable floor within the swimming pool and a covered tennis facility externally.

3.9 How Do School and Community Facilities Co-exist?

A number of consultees requested further information on how the proposed facilities would work with both community and school use during the day and would the community facilities be compromised because of the shared use?

4.0 RESPONDING TO CONSULTATION COMMENTS

development of the proposals and helped to focus the attention of the Design Team onto key areas of concern for local people.

3.1 Managing and Minimising Disruption During Construction

Care will be taken when planning the works to minimise disruption to the local community. This will include considerations relating to access, noise and dust. The Senior Leadership Team and staff of the school will work with the project team and main contractor to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum.

Large areas of the existing park will remain accessible during the construction period and careful consideration of phasing will take into account early stage development of new areas of park to allow these to be accessed as soon as possible during the construction period.

Both a Construction and Traffic Management Plan and a Noise Impact Assessment will be submitted as part of the Planning Application.

3.2 Preservation and Protection of Trees

The current proposals ensure that the three mature trees of significant value and in close proximity to the new community campus will be retained.

An arborist has undertaken a survey of the trees within the site boundary including any recommended root protection zones required and this with be adhered to and submitted as part of the Planning Application alongside an associated Tree Retention and Protection Plan.

3.3 Area of Archeological Interest

Following the consultation an archeologist was engaged to undertake a desk-based assessment of the proposed site and in particular the area of interest noted by the community. This assessment established In addition to the Pre-Application Consultation the project team have that there are surviving remains of local to region heritage value and negligible to medium sensitivity within the proposed site. The exact

used for spectating events within the enclosed area.

Mitigation measures to avoid, reduced and offset the effects of the proposed development with be agreed with Scottish Borders Council Archaeological Advisor and detailed in a Written Scheme of Investigation and implemented in advance of development.

The complete archeological desk-based survey will be submitted as part of the Planning Application.

3.4 Traffic Impact on Surrounding Roads

It is proposed that the area of the existing swimming pool and associated car park will be replaced with dual staff and community car park as well as a dedicated bus drop off and pick up area which will move the buses off Livingstone Place helping improve traffic flow at peak times. This 'off-site' car park is proposed in order to drastically reduce the number of vehicles within Scott Park and improve the safety of both pupils and imagined Scott Park will best serve the local community. the community.

There will also be provisions made to support and encourage the use of sustainable transport methods such as secure cycle storage and accessible changing facilities within the community campus.

A formal Transport Assessment was undertaken which covered existing transport conditions, anticipated trip generation and a traffic impact assessment and it was concluded that the proposed development will not have any detrimental impact to other users of the transport network in the area.

A copy of the Transport Assessment will be submitted as part of the planning application.

3.5 Improvements to Scott Park

established 'The Scott Park Working Group'. Representatives from the local community were invited to a number of workshops with members

The comments and queries raised by consultees aided the continuing it was suggested that it was possibly from the 19th Century and perhaps and ideas for the re-imagined Scott Park. Over the course of a number of sessions the project team have listened, discussed, reflected and incorporated these ideas into the proposals that are included in the Planning Application.

> More information on the proposals can be found the Design and Access Statement which is included in the Planning Application.

3.6 EP11

Planning Policy EP11 of The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan states that the loss of greenspace (protected under EP11) will be permitted if new comparable open space is provided or enhancements to existing open space are made. The proposals show an overall area increase for Scott Park and propose enhancements to the existing park areas. As stated in 3.5 these proposals have been developed in conjunction with the Scott Park Working Group to ensure that the re-

A more detailed response to how the project responds to EP11 has been included as part of the Planning Application.

3.7 Life Expectancy of Facilities

Life expectancy of building components and elements vary, however we are passionate about our buildings in the Scottish Borders and want them to remain in the community for as long as possible. The building we have designed has been designed using materials which have life longevity and therefore we would expect the life expectancy to be in the region of at least 50-60 years. Scottish Borders Council will endeavour to maintain these facilities for years to come and ensure they are kept in a good state of repair for not only our pupils with thriving futures ahead of them, but also for our respected community.

3.8 Sports Facilities

The project team have discussed and reviewed these enhancements and of the forecast of use. The forecast level of use of these is not such nature of the noted earthworks was not able to be determined however of the project team and during these were able to convey their vision that would warrant the inclusion of increased sports hall provision or a

4.0 RESPONDING TO CONSULTATION COMMENTS

moveable swimming pool within the project. Covered tennis courts are proposed as part of the application, with their inclusion subject to an ongoing funding application.

3.9 How Do School and Community Facilities Co-exist?

It is envisaged that the existing level of community use provided at the current Galashiels Swimming Pool and at the Queens Leisure Centre will be maintained and enhanced within the new community campus building with provision of additional facilities such as the hydrotherapy pool, dance studio and fitness suite. Public access to the new sports and leisure facilities will be managed by Live Borders and work is currently being undertaken to optimise the use of the facilities across both community and education groups.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Pre-Application Consultation process raised some valuable points from pupils, local residents, key stakeholders and the wider community and these were taken on board as far as possible to inform the development of the proposals submitted as part of this Planning Application.

It is acknowledged that there may be a number of further issues raised following the submission of the detailed planning application due to the development of the design.

The Pre-Application Consultation process has been an invaluable part of the on-going development of the project in arriving at the final proposals now contained within the Planning Application. The local community has contributed significantly to this process and the project team wish to extend their appreciation and thanks to all of those who have been part of this process.

APPENDIX A

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE AND ATTACHMENTS

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APPENDIX A



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Telephone ...0300 100 1800 Telephone .0131.464.6100 ...

The site is located at Galashiels Academy, Elm Row, Galashiels, TD1 3	HU
Please refer to attached site location drawing:	
'GCC-JMA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-00-0010'	
COO SHIFT EE EE BITT OF SOIL	

Major development including the demollion of the existing school and erection of a new 2 and 3 storey community campus (including secondary school with provision for pupils with severe and complex needs and community eximming pool and sports facilities) with associated hard and soft landscaping, external sports provision, service access, car parking and improvements to the landscaping of the areas of parkland included within the site boundary.

State which other parties have received a copy of the Proposal of Application Notice

he following community councils and local councillors, who's visualshiels Academy, have been issued with a copy;	varus ran within the calcriment area of the existing
Community Councils: Salashiels (T Alder, secretary) Jovenfords & District (S Turnbull, secretary) ferior (J Williams, chairperson) stow & Fountainhall (J Mushlin, secretary) weedbank (R Purvis, secretary)	
cod Councillars. anny Addition. Callashiels and District only Anderson, Gallashiels and District only Anderson, Gallashiels and District man, Jentine, Gallashiels and District enty Linehan, Leaderside and Melrose on Idens. Leaderside and Melrose on Idens. Leaderside and Melrose flast Edition. Flast Bell, Tweeddate East flower Statistics. Proceedings East and Bell, Tweeddate East flower Statistics. Proceedings are all the Control of the	

To ensure the safe participation of the community and local stakeholders, this consultation strategy is digitally focused. However, should Scottish Government Covid restrictions ease and if it is safe to do so, we will review the use of in person consultations where appropriate.
It is proposed that this consultation programme will launch in July 2021 with specific dates to be confirmed and includes a range of features to ensure best practice in line with the expectations of a Proposal of Application Notice:
A consultation website, providing details of the proposals and relevant drawings and visuals with the embedded facility for visitors to provide feedback– launch date TBC
A dedicated 'Public Consultation Event' facilitated via Microsoft Teams or similar allowing members of the public to have a two-way conversation with the project team – date TBC
A Community Council presentation and meeting, facilitated via Microsoft Teams or similar – date TBC
A physical exhibition of proposals hosted at the Galashiels Transport Interchange – date TBC
A newspaper notice providing information on the engagement processes above and how to contribute feedback on the consultation – date TBC
Social media promotion of all of the engagement processes above and how to contribute feedback on to the consultation
Planning Authority Reference Number: / /PRE
Date of receipt of the Proposal of Application Notice

19.05.21 CD DT imarchitects PAN Site Boundary Plan T: 0131 464 6100 F: 0131 464 6150 Scottish Borders Council | Maryor | M 1:1000 @ A1

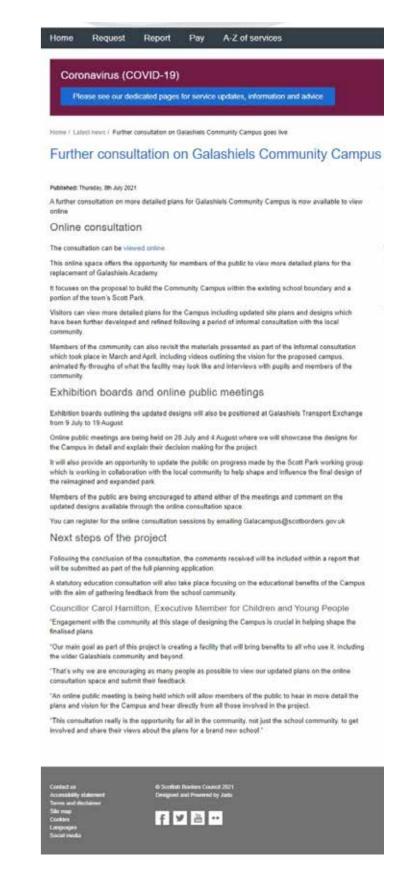
APPENDIX B

NEWSPAPER ADVERT AND PUBLICITY









MARCH 2022

APPENDIX C

PAN CONSULTATION BOARDS

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