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To: localplan <localplan@scotborders.gov.uk>

Subject: Question 6: relating to Eshiels –MESHI001 and MESHI002; also Cardrona SCARD002

Question 6: relating to Eshiels –MESHI001 and MESHI002; also Cardrona SCARD002

I am opposed to these developments for the following reasons

Environmental

This would cause the destruction of ancient pasture; increases the risk of pollution to the River Tweed and its tributary; will affect local wildlife (and hence tourism); it may cause damage to the historic sites, buildings and artefacts close to the access road;

Over development: this would produce a highly visible development visible from the road, and just as visible as the gross over development of the highly visible (and wholly unsympathetic) Kittlegairy estate on the other side of the Tweed. An almost continuous development along this road would be the result, spoiling the view for residents and visitors alike, and having an adverse effect on the whole valley.

The resultant increase in population would have a knock-on effect on the services in nearby Peebles, which are already stretched, and unable to provide the level of service residents need. (The report suggests that services have the capacity to cope with demand, but residents needing to access schools, doctors' surgeries, social services, etc feel that in their experience this is not true) This area does not need – and should not be forced to have – an increase in population.

The plan is in danger of making Peebles and its environs a commuter area, to the great detriment of those who already live there. If Edinburgh has a problem with a lack of affordable housing it must address those needs itself rather than export impose the problem to other areas where they could be disastrous.

Access road – the A72 is already busy and fast: it is often dangerous to turn on or off the road, especially if it's across traffic. This has already been acknowledged by the necessity to build enlarged access at Nether Horseburgh, near Dirtpot Corner, and to widen the road by the Community Recycling Centre. Development in this location will exacerbate the problem. This is a narrow road for the volume of traffic it is expected to take; further along the road at Walkerburn, the road essentially single track, causing bottlenecks and risking lives, especially if emergency services need to get through.

Although it is not actually stated in the MIR report, there seems to be an indication that in future road expansion might take place along the old railway tracks, currently under use/development as cycling, walking and riding routes. These are of great importance to residents and visitors alike for recreation, and their loss would be highly detrimental to recreation in the area. *See also "Tourism"*

The A72 sees frequent closure or restrictions due to traffic accidents – there is no alternative route, the route on the south side of the Tweed is wholly unsuitable for anything other than a small amount of local traffic, and it cannot take large vehicles such as buses or HGVs in the event of the main road being closed. This has a serious impact on emergency services.

Cultural: this is an historic and close-knit, peaceful community at Eshiels, with its roots in significant post-WWI social change, and in the history of arboriculture: this development would destroy that. Numerous artefacts alongside the roads and tracks would also be at risk.

Nothing of what is proposed at Eshiels would benefit the community that lives at Eshiels.

The creation of the community at Cardona has produced a village with little community spirit, and few facilities – it is a dormitory village, at odds with the local tradition and ethos. Enlarging it would seem to exacerbate its existing problems.

Flooding: two years ago the widespread flooding along the Tweed valley demonstrated that the A72 is very vulnerable to flooding: for much of its length it is also at risk from erosion by the Tweed. Climate predictions suggest more rain, with subsequent floods that will be more frequent, and deeper. Putting further housing in an area where its vital routes are at risk, would be irresponsible. There are no alternative routes in the event of flooding – the Tweed Valley is very vulnerable. Building over agricultural land will prevent rainfall moving slowly through the soil, run-off will be swifter, and this will exacerbate flooding.

Tourism: this area sees an ever-increasing number of short-term visitors, especially for cycling and walking. Increasing the settlements along the A72 risks an increase in the number of accidents, with higher numbers using the road: in particular with cyclists coming off the hill routes very quickly, straight onto the A72, as we have seen on numerous occasions.

Carbon foot print: an increase in the number of houses (and their occupants) will mean people doing more journeys to get to work, shops etc as there are no facilities close by. This is at odds with the report's stated aim to decrease the carbon footprint in the area.

Food security: with the country seeing population growth, the need for a secure local food supply increases, and destroying good agricultural land by building on it is unwise. Land unsuitable for food production should be the land put forward for building – it may be more expensive for the developer, but then it would be even more expensive to try to produce essential food from unsuitable land.

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summarised the proposed housing numbers from the MIR report. (Note: I have had to make a few assumptions to get these numbers as I have described in the spreadsheet). This shows the almost unbelievable weighting the Council are giving to developments in the Peebles area as opposed to the rest of the Borders (of 'preferred' developments, 1110 are in Peebles and surrounding area as against 228 for the whole of the rest of the Borders).

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Question 7:

I am opposed to the proposed housing developments in Peebles and Eddleston (including SPEEB008, APEEB056, AEDDL008, AEDDL009, SEDDL001, SPEEB009) for the following reasons

Environmental: this would cause the destruction of ancient pasture; increases the risk of pollution to the River Tweed and its tributary; will affect local wildlife (and hence tourism); building has already taken place in the area, which will speed run-off during heavy rain, putting the area downstream at higher risk of flooding.

Over development: Over the last 10 years Peebles has borne the brunt of the housing developments in the Borders: the proposal that it should be forced to accommodate the majority of ALL the proposed housing developments in the Borders is unacceptable. At worst, it should bear only a small proportion of the intended developments; at best it should be excluded from any further housing development on the grounds that it has already been forced to accept more than its fair share. It is in imminent danger of becoming a dormitory town for Edinburgh, and this should be avoided at all costs, or it will destroy the community that lives there.

Peebles is already big enough. The High Street cannot cope with the current volume of traffic, parking is very difficult to find, and there are no other sites available for extra parking.

Most of the traffic from the proposed developments on the west side of Peebles will have to access the area via a junction that is already difficult and dangerous, and have to use a bridge that is already vulnerable. This area already sees frequent traffic jams – as the emergency services (ambulance, fire engines) also need to use this road makes this area highly unsuitable for further development.

Despite the claims of the LDP, the facilities and services in Peebles are already stretched (as any resident will tell you), and simply could not cope with a larger population. If any of these developments go ahead, the resultant increase in population would have a knock-on effect on the services in Peebles, which are already stretched, and unable to provide the level of service residents need. It is particularly difficult for any disabled driver to access services in the High Street, or at Hay Lodge Hospital, due to the lack of disabled parking.

The plan is in danger of making Peebles and its environs a commuter area, to the great detriment of those who already live there. If Edinburgh has a problem with a lack of affordable housing it must address those needs itself rather than export impose the problem to other areas where they could be disastrous.

Road access: the topography of Peebles and its environs mean the town and its transport links are very vulnerable. There are 5 access routes for Peebles: one (via Manor Brig) closed some years ago, leaving 4.

The B7062 is not suitable for large vehicles, and in places is barely wide enough for 2 cars to pass – it is at risk from erosion by the Tweed in many places, and it regularly floods in several places. It should not be relied on as an access route.

The A72 eastwards is already busy and fast: it is often dangerous to turn on or off the road, especially if it's across traffic. This has already been acknowledged by the necessity to build enlarged access at Nether Horseburgh, near Dirtpot Corner, and to widen the road by the Community Recycling Centre. Any increase in the Peebles area will exacerbate the problem. This is a narrow road for the volume of traffic it is expected to take; further along the road at Walkerburn, the road essentially single track, causing bottlenecks and risking lives, especially if emergency services need to get through.

Although it is not actually stated in the MIR report, there seems to be an indication that in future road expansion might take place along the old railway tracks, currently under use/development as cycling, walking and riding routes. These are of great importance to residents and visitors alike for recreation, and their loss would be highly detrimental to recreation in the area. See also "Tourism". *The A72 eastwards* sees frequent closure or restrictions due to traffic accidents – there is no alternative route, the route on the south side of the Tweed is wholly unsuitable for anything other than a small amount of local traffic, and it cannot take large vehicles such as buses or HGVs in the event of the main road being closed. This has a serious impact on emergency services.

The A72 westwards is single track for a short distance, controlled by (often malfunctioning) traffic lights. The road is barely wide enough for 2 lorries to pass, and is much used by very heavy quarry and timber lorries. The first part of the road is in a precarious position above the Tweed: the walls collapse regularly, and the road in places has been seen by contractors to be undermined. It should not be regarded as a reliable access route, without either major engineering works, or else relocation. The road has many bends, and when it is closed by traffic accidents, there are no suitable alternative minor roads that can take the traffic, necessitating long detours.

The A703 northwards (towards Edinburgh) thus road is still only a double track road: it can be very fast, and as the main route out of the central Borders is very busy. It ends in a dangerous junction, where there are relatively frequent accidents, which necessitate road closures. Alternative routes for traffic when this occurs (eg B7059 Rommano Bridge) and various minor country lanes - are narrow and not suitable for heavy traffic, or for HGVs and buses. Increased developments in Peebles whether of housing, commercial or mixed – will exacerbate the existing difficulties of living in area with an inadequate road network.

Any developments proposed at Chapelhill will need to use *the Rosetta/back road*, which again is very narrow, in poor repair and barely able to cope with current usage.

Although it is not actually stated in the MIR report, there seems to be an indication that in future road expansion might take place along the old railway tracks, currently under use/development as cycling, walking and riding routes. These are of great importance to residents and visitors alike for recreation. See also "Tourism"

Cultural: Peebles is a close-knit community, but is under great strain already as the present population is too big for the facilities and services that are in place. The High Street – the

only route through the centre of Peebles - is frequently at a standstill, due to the volume of traffic, large vehicles (buses, timber and quarry lorries, agricultural vehicles, large delivery trucks) and to multiple buses waiting at the Post Office terminus. Insufficient parking also tempts some drivers to double-park in order to access shops or services. Car parks are always full even at quiet times, and during peak times and cultural events parked vehicles overflow along eg Kingsmeadows Road, Springhill and the Old Town.

School: although the report states that the school can cope with the proposed increase in population service users and residents in Peebles will disagree strongly with this. No new school is planned for several years, and the current High School needs to be replaced, it is already crowded.

Flooding: two years ago the widespread flooding along the Tweed valley demonstrated that the A72 is very vulnerable to flooding: for much of its length it is also at risk from erosion by the Tweed in both eastward and westward directions. Climate predictions suggest more rain, with subsequent floods that will be more frequent, and deeper. Putting further housing in an area where its vital routes are at risk, would be irresponsible. There are no alternative routes in the event of flooding – the Tweed Valley is very vulnerable, and it would even be difficult to evacuate residents in a major flood event – especially if this renders the sole bridge unstable.

Local economy and food security: with the country seeing population growth, the need for a secure local food supply increases, and destroying good agricultural land by building on it is unwise. Land unsuitable for food production should be the land put forward for building – it may be more expensive for the developer, but then it would be even more expensive to try to produce essential food from unsuitable land. The report has stated that agriculture is one of the main sources of employment in the area, and the proposed developments will reduce the size of several agricultural enterprises making them unsustainable – also in breach of the report's stated aims.

Tourism: this area sees an ever-increasing number of short-term visitors, especially for cycling and walking. Increasing the settlements along the A72 and A703 risks an increase in the number of accidents, with higher numbers using the road: in particular with cyclists coming off the hill routes or quiet lanes very quickly, straight onto the main road, as we have seen on numerous occasions.

Carbon foot print: an increase in the number of houses, businesses and their occupants will mean people doing more journeys to get to work, shops etc as there are limited facilities in Peebles, and none in the Eddleston/Cardrona/Eshiels areas. This is at odds with the report's stated aim to decrease the carbon footprint in the area.

Edinburgh City Region plan: although the Borders are included in this, they do not seem to benefit from it at all, other than being forced to accommodate Edinburgh's overflow population, and bear the costs of so doing. Instead of retaining in Edinburgh all the important research and technology developments, the Edinburgh City Region Plan should be creating at least 2 Centres of Excellence and Technology in the southern Borders in towns such as Selkirk, Hawick and Jedburgh, to help these towns become vibrant and sustainable. The MIR in its current form does not serve the Borders population well.

