



## Comments on Draft Development Framework for Hallhill South West

### About us

Sustaining Dunbar's Transport Group wants to make it easier to travel around Dunbar by sustainable modes of transport. In addition to the environmental imperatives, we all benefit directly from a more sociable and pleasant community, freed from the nuisance and danger of busy roads. Our 14 active group members represent a wide cross-section of the Dunbar community, and we have given this development framework considerable attention. We believe that facilities for walking and cycling and public transport should be built-in from the start, and we hope that you will take our comments on board. We would be delighted with any opportunity to discuss this further.

### General Comments

We are pleased that the document already covers many of the points we would have made, and we hope that the comments below are constructive. However, the length of the proposals was off-putting and we are disappointed that the document has progressed so far prior to the community being invited to comment.

The draft appears dominated by talk of enclosure and urban form, however this site can only be suburban and it should be the landscape (in particular the woods) which is used to create the place. Indeed the document appears to be dominated by generic policy statements, and we would rather see more definitive general objectives.

We suggest that any development on this site should prioritise:

- **Sense of Place** – the creation of a quality environment where people want to live, play relax. The place should be characterised by a green landscape e.g. linear parks and boulevards.
- **Integration** – enable the integration of the developments into the surrounding community and woodlands through a cohesive layout including pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- **Movement** - to provide linkage to, and the upgrading of, the core pedestrian/cycle network. Provide good access public transport and discourage car use, particularly on shorter journeys, by prioritising pedestrian and cycle movement.
- **Landscape Structure** – to create a landscape structure which defines the edge of Dunbar. Create a linear park, as an extension to the existing woods, which is central to the pattern of redevelopment.
- **Open Space** – the creation of a series of quality open spaces which meet the varied needs of the residents. These spaces should be integral to the overall urban form and should be safe, useable and accessible.

**The new development should incorporate walking/cycling/public transport as the primary modes of travel to town, the primary schools and the secondary school.** Cycle/pedestrian routes should be given priority over motorised traffic e.g. they should cross roads at grade. We are concerned that

once people get into their cars then they can just as easily drive on to the next town as stop in Dunbar. It is crucial for the vitality of the town centre as well as for environmental reasons that Dunbar residents do not use their cars as the default mode of transport.

## Detailed Comments

**Para 4.1** The site is approximately 2km from town centre which gives a walking time of 20-30 minutes (not 10-15 minutes as suggested) and even longer for those with young children or those who have difficulty walking. This is significant because it discourages walking as an everyday mode of transport to the town and so, unless dedicated high-quality cycle routes and bus services are provided then people will choose to drive<sup>1</sup>. We suggest that as cycling already is a common form of transport in Dunbar it is not unreasonable to expect a significant number of people to cycle to the High Street or train station, *provided that safe, high quality routes exist*.

A bus service should be reliable and frequent at peak/school times and at other times be a variable/DRT (demand responsive transport)/ dial-a-bus type of service.

**Para 6.0** All new developments should prioritise facilities for cycling and walking as sustainable modes of transport. Dunbar has a particular need to discourage car use as there are a limited number of crossing points along the East Coast Main Line and it is simply not possible for everyone to drive into town.

**Para 6.4** The distributor road extension of Brodie Road must allow for cycling along it. We would prefer that traffic speeds are not able to exceed 20mph so that feels safe for cycling but failing this, a dedicated cycle path should be provided along either side. Frequent crossing places for pedestrians should be provided.

**Para 6.5** Traffic entering the area from the Eweford/A1 junction *must* be slowed down. The existing cycle route connecting Dunbar to West Barns should be maintained as a safe route and not compromised by the extra traffic at this junction. The existing cycle route should be properly connected to the site.

**Para 6.6** The road on the site's western boundary is a key walking and cycle path and this must be recognised if traffic is to be directed here. **Crucially, this road will be the main walking and cycling route to the secondary school and must be safe for unaccompanied pupils to travel along.** Consideration must be given to the tunnel at Beveridge Row which cannot handle large volumes of traffic, but could take a mini-bus service.

**Para 6.7** The increase of traffic at Spott Road will mean that a pelican crossing is required at the junction with Queen's Road.

**Para 6.10** We very strongly agree that there should not be a loop road past the new primary school for the all reasons given in the consultation document.

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<sup>1</sup> Table 18 of the government's *Scottish Household Survey: Travel Diary 2007-2008* (published in September this year) shows that 21% of journeys of 1-2km are walked and 20% are cycled, but for journeys of 2-3km only 7% of people walk while 19% still cycle

**Para 6.11** We do not see how such a loop road can be created without the loss of a significant number of mature trees and stress that traffic must be kept away from the new primary school

**Para 6.14** The existing network of footpaths and cyclepaths is not sufficient to link the site to the town and the primary schools. The categorisation of paths on Maps 2 and 3 are misleading, and paths through the woods, while useful, must not be defined as primary pedestrian/cycle routes. Any paths through the woods should be unlit so as not to disturb the wildlife and will be subject to fallen leaves and branches. However all primary paths must be well-lit after dark. Secondary paths through the trees will form part of the path network and should have a hard surface which is sympathetic to the woodland setting.

We suggest that the developers provide the minimum network of paths as shown on Map A. (Also see Google Maps

<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=117249220622766791324.00047581844bcfcb9b29b&z=15> for further comments on the required path network.) The path network should incorporate links to beyond the site e.g. Belhaven farm, Belhaven Bay, the secondary school.

**Para 6.15** East Lothian Council should discourage the construction of new paths through the woods, although existing paths may need to be resurfaced. All new dedicated pedestrian and cycle paths should be at least 4m wide with grass verges.

**Para 6.17** We again stress that a private motor vehicles should not be provided with a direct link to Kellie Road as this would be at the expense of the woods and increase traffic in the vicinity of the new Primary School. Consideration might be given to the creation of a bus route through the site connecting Brodie Road with Beveridge Row which may form part of the loop required, and would be much more suitable than any link from Kellie Road. The planned bus route must ensure that those local residents with impaired mobility can access convenient public transport.

**Para 6.18** The railway station is 20-30 minutes away on foot, and 10-15 minutes by bike. Many commuters would happily cycle to the train station given suitable cyclepaths and bike parking facilities and that this would reduce the need for car-parking at and in the vicinity of the station. Access to the station from the south side would significantly reduce walking and cycling journey times and make this option even more appealing.

**Para 7.27** In addition to private parking provision consideration should be given to car-club parking spaces (such as City Car Club in Edinburgh). The developer should be asked for a contribution towards funding an appropriate number of car-club cars for a minimum of 3 years. Visitor car-parking should be adopted by the Council to allow the future provision of car-club cars within these spaces.

**Appendix 4** There should be plenty of built-in undercover provision for bike parking at people's homes also at any new public amenities. The development requires least 2 spaces per dwelling.

## Developer contributions

Any housing development on the site will have a significant impact on traffic around town. In order to minimise this we require good walking/cycling/public transport connections to town. We suggest that the developer should contribute to

- Installation/upgrading of all shared-use paths marked in red on Map A. These need to be well-lit, high-quality routes at least 4m wide
- Upgrading of all the pedestrian railway crossing tunnels as marked on Map A
- Installation of toucan crossings on Countess Road
- Installation of pelican crossing on Spott Road at junction with Queens Road
- Funding of an appropriate number of Car-Club cars for a minimum of 3 years
- Installation of additional bike racks and changing/showering facilities at the secondary school
- A frequent local bus service to the town and connecting with the train services at the station

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