

Archived: 18 January 2021 11:31:40

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat, 16 Jan 2021 14:25:30

To:

Subject: Netherbarns AGALA029

Sensitivity: Normal

CAUTION: External Email

I wish to register my strong objection to the proposed housing development at Netherbarns, across the Tweed from Abbotsford House. This is a wholly inappropriate and insensitive scheme for a site of unique significance for the Borders, for Scotland as a whole and indeed for the world.

The view from Abbotsford was deeply important to Sir Walter Scott, and it is of real importance for us who today revere his legacy not just as a supremely great man and a writer of genius, but as a Borders countryman, estate developer, and forester. It is deeply ironic that this planning proposal falls to be considered in the 250th anniversary year of Scott's birth, when the eyes of the world will be upon Scott and his legacy.

A great part of that legacy is his magical creation at Abbotsford and in its policies. Scott loved the woods he had planted: his oaks, he suggested, would outlast his laurels. The final view he enjoyed and the last sound he heard were those of his beloved Tweed. The Netherbarns scheme is far too intrusive and much too disrespectful of the topography, the history, the sentiment and the legacy. Abbotsford and its surroundings, and the views inwards and outwards to and from the house itself are the essence of Scott and his world.

The proposed screening of the site from Abbotsford appears woefully inadequate, particularly in winter. The Abbotsford grounds are enjoyed year-round. This fact appears to have been forgotten! Nor can the peaceful and restorative power of the Abbotsford landscape ever be recaptured once it is compromised, defiled or lost for ever.

This development will greatly affect the amenity of the house and estate of Abbotsford. It will surely have an adverse impact on tourism in the immediate area, with all the economic counter-benefits that go with the destruction of historic and naturally beautiful environments.

I am shocked and deeply disturbed that such a proposal can be seriously contemplated as somehow so worthy of endorsement that the price – destruction of a heritage view, and a powerful sense of place – can be deemed worth paying.

Dr Iain Gordon Brown FSA FSAScot FRSE

Hon Fellow, National Library of Scotland

Former President, Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club

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