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From:

Sent: Mon, 18 Jan 2021 11:32:17

To:

Subject: Netherbarns

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:



CAUTION: External Email

Dear Sir

Please ensure that my attached comments and my previous objection to the proposed development at Netherbarns are placed before the Reporter.

Yours

Violet M Baillie



18 January 2021

Dear Sir

Proposed Local Development Plan Objection, January 2021

Galashiels Settlement Boundary

This is a disgraceful proposal, which is obviously intended to make it easier for SBC to succeed in their wish to allocate Netherbarns for substantial housing development by including it within the Galashiels Settlement Boundary and removing it from the Protection of the Countryside Around Towns Policy.

I strongly object to these proposals and ask that the whole of Netherbarns, including Netherbarns Farmhouse, its steading and grounds, be designated as being outside the Galashiels Settlement Boundary, and afforded the protection of being included in the Countryside Around Towns Policy.

AGALA029/Netherbarns

I object to this proposal in the strongest possible terms. How it is that SBC planners can even contemplate including housing development at Netherbarns in the Local Plan, after it has been rejected by no less than 4 Public Inquiries in the last 12 years, is a shocking inditement of the Planning Department. That even one councillor should consider it appropriate, is a sad reflection on the lack of understanding of the national, and international, importance of Sir Walter Scott together with his home and his designed landscape which make up Abbotsford.

The Developer, Planners and some Councillors like to claim that there is adequate screening from a small woodland area, and that, in any case, the house is closed in winter when the leaves have fallen. This is wrong. They know, or should know, because they have been told on several occasions, that expert advice is that the trees are reaching the end of their lives, meaning that felling and replanting will be required and is being planned. They know, or should know, that Abbotsford is open in the winter. The House is open in December, the Visitor Centre is open all year round, as is the estate which attracts many thousands of visitors, especially since the Trust have restored Sir Walter's paths. It is obvious that SBC vastly underestimate the value of Abbotsford in historic, artistic and economic terms.

On their website, SBC claim that their proposals for Netherbarns are misunderstood. On the contrary, they are well understood. Do they really expect the public to think that if this proposal for part of the site goes ahead, the developer will not come back later to seek permission for further development?

One would have hoped that the SBC would be focussed on developing Borders' historic and natural assets for the benefit of present-day Borderers, and that they would have a well thought through plan that would maximise the attraction of the Borders to national and international tourists. That the Council which was so enthusiastic about bringing the Great Tapestry of Scotland to Galashiels, is now intent, once again, on diminishing the value of Abbotsford to the Region, is almost unbelievable. Instead, SBC should be straining every sinew to ensure that Borders reaps the enormous benefits which could, and should, come from Scott's 250th Anniversary, followed by the Year of Scotland's Stories. It would be a tragedy if the historic view from Abbotsford, which brought solace to Scott as he lay dying, was lost forever to the many in order to satisfy the self-interest of the few.

Please forward this and my previous objection to the Reporter who is dealing with this matter.

Yours faithfully

Violet M Baillie