



Dear Sir/Madam

Objection to LDP2Consultation/AGALA029/Netherbarns, plan to build new houses at Netherbarns - 15/1/21

Since the last two rejections of planning permission by the Scottish Government Reporter, major new developments have taken place at Abbotsford House and grounds, with 15 million pounds spent on the new visitor centre and landscaped paths through the grounds and along the river. Abbotsford House and its pathways are used by hundreds of thousands of day visitors, and look directly across to the proposed development.

Abbotsford house is the biggest paying tourist attraction in the borders, so why is the Local Authority actively trying to destroy the surrounding landscape and encourage a resultant visual, noise, traffic and litter pollution ? One of the main attractions of the Scottish Borders is the maintenance and promotion of our heritage, historic and cultural interests, which other regions simply can't compete with. Why are you threatening to sabotage this and the contribution of tourism to the Borders economy ?

Abbotsford House and walkways are now an all year attraction, especially through Winter, not just for the many visitors to the Region, but for many local taxpayers. There is now more winter use of the house and designed grounds by the community and beyond.

The new access road, and the resultant considerable increase in the number of vehicles from the proposed development, on to the Kingsknowes roundabout will cause traffic chaos and safety issues for existing residents. There are major queues from 8.00am to 9.30am, and 3.30pm to 6.00pm every working day, while traffic is crawling to get into Gala for Saturday shoppers.

The site is highly visible in the wider landscape, not just the views from Abbotsford House and from the designed landscape, but also in the views towards there, including the Southern Upland Way.

The new road itself will be a visual blot on the landscape, and will inflict severe noise pollution on Abbotsford over the river, during and after its construction.

What is a pleasant approach to Galashiels, looking over to Abbotsford, will now become a ribbon of urban sprawl along former greenbelt land.

This greenfield site is a major part in our jewel in the crown in the Scottish Borders. It is one of the things that make us different and more attractive from other areas. Any development here does not outweigh the value of our Scottish Heritage.



This photograph was taken 20 metres from the southern edge of Abbotsford House, looking North West towards the A7 and site for proposed development.

As the photo demonstrate, the development will be clearly visible from the new paths. The houses on the other side of the A7 are clearly visible, especially with no control over exterior colours or attempt to blend in. It is quite easy to visualise similar housing on both sides of the A7 !

I do not accept that attempting to hide the proposed development behind the suggested woodland screening would adequately mitigate the adverse impacts on the settings of the House and designed landscape.

Once again, I would suggest that our planners and councillors do not take the responsibility for spoiling our Borders heritage for short term gains or convenience.

The plans were rejected twice when visitor numbers to Abbotsford House were half of what they are now, and before the scenic paths were constructed which attract many many thousands of visitors. This makes the case for rejection even stronger today!

Yours sincerely

Bill Noble