

8th December 2020

Forward Planning Team
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
TD6 OSA

Dear Sirs

Re: Scottish Borders Local Development Plan Site Code: AMELR013

Further to your notification of 2nd November advising me of the wish to zone the above site for residential development I wish to raise my formal objection on the following grounds:

- a) Damage to conservation area and scheduled monument – the site in question is currently an historic orchard in the ownership of the National Trust for Scotland and part of a whole collection of gardens, house and cottages that should be viewed as one historic collection significant in the history of Melrose. Additionally a scheduled ancient monument runs through the site which could be damaged irreversibly in the construction of five residential properties (as indeed would be the historical boundary wall separating the orchard from the adjoining road)
- b) Damage to the environment – the orchard on the site provides a great environmental benefit for bees, owls, bats and other wildlife – this unique habitat would be destroyed by building five properties on the site. Additionally extra light pollution would be introduced through installing more street lights
- c) Loss of a recreational facility and green space for the people of Melrose- currently this site is much used by walkers and dog walkers (and visitors to NTS property Harmony House) and additionally is a much enjoyed, and used, site for the annual Book Festival. All this amenity would be lost if built upon.
- d) Road access – St Mary's Road on which this site is located is quite congested already with traffic in connection with the School and Rugby Grounds and the additional traffic generated by the property owners would be unsuitable for the road.

Would this not be the opportunity to zone the site within the Local Area Plan as recreational land to be enjoyed by all the people of Melrose (and Scotland) in perpetuity - as the benefactress must surely have intended when she gifted her property to the National Trust for Scotland some years ago?