

[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Cc:

[REDACTED]
24 January 2021 16:56
localplan

CAUTION: External Email

FAO: Forward Planning Team

Proposed Scottish Borders Local Development Plan: AGALA029 Netherbarns

Europa Nostra UK has recently learned about the concerns expressed by the Abbotsford Trust and others with regard to the development of the Netherbarns site included within the proposed Scottish Borders Local Development Plan and we wish to register our concerns as set out in the attached letter.

Regards

[REDACTED]
Europa Nostra UK

We aim to foster enthusiasm for European cultural heritage and seek to find and strengthen the values and ideas that connect us to our colleagues in Europe.

Registered charity: 1127041

Web: www.europanostra.org.uk

Twitter: @EuropaNostraUK



Europa Nostra UK

Web: www.europanostra.org.uk

Email: EuropaNostraUK@gmail.com

Twitter: @EuropaNostraUK

Scottish Borders Council
Forward Planning
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
TD6 0SA

By email: localplan@scotborders.gov.uk

24 January 2021

Dear Forward Planning Team

Proposed Scottish Borders Local Development Plan: AGALA029 Netherbarns

Europa Nostra UK has recently learned about the [concerns expressed by the Abbotsford Trust](#) and others with regard to the development of the Netherbarns site included within the *Proposed Scottish Borders Local Development Plan* and we wish to register our concerns.

Europa Nostra UK* is the country representation of Europa Nostra, which is the leading citizens' movement to protect and celebrate Europe's cultural and natural heritage. The Abbotsford Trust is a previous winner of the prestigious [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards](#) (2014). The Trust deservedly won this internationally respected award for its exemplar Abbotsford conservation project, which safeguarded one of Scotland's most notable cultural sites; a site that is important to scholars, students and the reading public of all ages, and to all with an interest in Scottish identity, history, politics, literature, architecture, gardens, the Romantic Movement and, not least, the energetic and generous personality of Sir Walter Scott himself.

In making the award [the jury](#) "**recognised and greatly valued the international importance of this project, celebrating Scott's beliefs and vision as well as his contribution to literature. The conservation of Abbotsford, dating from 1811, which Scott designed himself, is of the utmost importance to the study of the Romantic Movement in Europe. The arrangement of its contents, gardens and landscape now enable his inspiration to be appreciated by visitors from all parts of the world.**"

There can be no doubt that Abbotsford and Scott's legacy are outstandingly important on both a national and an international stage. Europa Nostra UK therefore wishes to add its voice to the concerns expressed about the proposal for the Nethbarns site (AGALA029 Netherbarns). We fully support the comments made by the Abbotsford Trust, and its justifiable concern that the associated light, sound and visual intrusions of the proposed development will impact adversely on the historic setting and the cultural landscape of Abbotsford, and the Tweed Valley.

We especially agree that the potentially harmful impact of this proposal will reduce the enjoyment of visitors to Abbotsford and threaten the considerable economic contribution that Abbotsford makes to the Scottish Borders.

At a time of great fiscal challenge the potential negative economic impact must be taken very seriously. The visitor economy is inherently fragile, but remains crucial to ensuring a sustainable future for the people of the Scottish Borders. The positive economic outcome of the Abbotsford conservation project was, no doubt, a key element in the trust being awarded nearly £5m from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2009. Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, [said at that time](#): **"Once its transformation is complete, Abbotsford will join Scotland's portfolio of world-class attractions showcasing its fascinating collections in a modern and dynamic way. The legacy of Sir Walter Scott will soon be a source of education and delight for visitors from home and abroad while making a significant contribution to Scotland's culture, society and economy."**

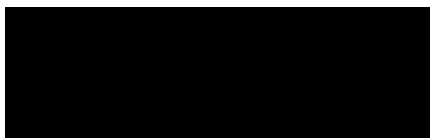
It would be thoroughly irresponsible to risk putting this substantial investment of public funding at risk through the misguided development plans for the Netherbarns site as currently proposed.

Europa Nostra UK therefore calls upon Scottish Borders Council to review the Netherbarns element of the proposed local development plan and, furthermore, to put in place measures to ensure that the significance of the site is properly safeguarded for the future. This is the perfect moment for the Council to show real leadership in understanding the important role that cultural heritage can play in Scotland's future wellbeing and acting to protect it.

As Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland, says in her introduction to [A Culture Strategy for Scotland](#) published in February 2020: **"The value of a strong culture and creative sector cannot be overestimated. Through sustaining and nurturing culture, we are investing in the future cultural, social and economic success of Scotland. For all these reasons, the Scottish Government values culture in and of itself. And we also recognise its wider impact. Culture brings people to live, work and do business here, and shapes our reputation as a warm, welcoming, open, progressive nation."**

Please take this message to heart as you consider the next steps in the local planning process and ensure that cultural heritage is given due prominence in your decision-making.

Yours faithfully



Sara Crofts BArch(Hons) MSc IHBC FRSA
Chair, Europa Nostra UK

cc:



The aims of Europa Nostra UK are:

- to nurture enthusiasm for our shared European cultural heritage
- to articulate the values and ideas that connect us to our colleagues in Europe
- to raise the profile of EN UK in order to support Europa Nostra's Europe-wide representation
- to foster links and co-operation with other European heritage bodies in civil society and beyond
- to sustain UK participation in shaping European heritage policy and vice versa