

FORMAL OBJECTION TO THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Site : AGALA029 (Netherbarns, Galashiels)

To whom it may concern,

This letter is outlining my formal objection to a local development plan (Site: AGALA029). My objection is based on a few key factors.

1) A site of natural beauty and national cycle route

The River Tweed is unmistakably a site of natural beauty and an important conservation site. It's proximity to Galashiels centre means this area is a welcome escape and piece of undisturbed nature that deserves preservation. The presence of the national cycle route also makes it an area worth protecting. The Southern Upland way is utilized by walkers, cyclists, and horse riders on a daily basis. A local development such as what's being proposed would no doubt disrupt those that use these natural facilities and cause a massive disruption to the natural peace of this area.

2) Home to the Abbotsford House

This is a Scottish heritage site. Just as important to this site as the house itself is the surrounding area and views from the House. This proposed build would greatly affect both the view from the House itself, but also the overall atmosphere and authenticity of the site.

Not only is the area important for Abbotsford, there's also an abandoned railway near the proposed site that would be affected by this build. Netherbarns is a location packed with rich history and character, this adds to the Abbotsford's allure and attracts visitors from all over the world. The Borders doesn't have a lot of historical sites such as this, and this build will risk something we can't afford to lose.

3) Protection of local wildlife

This area is home to all manner of wildlife - deer, birds of prey, salmon, trout, otters, and many more animals that rely on the peace and undisturbed land in this area.

Any new developments will affect the Tweed. Any inflow or run off water is at risk of polluting and contaminating the Tweed and affecting the local wildlife. People travel from all over the world to fish in the Tweed, something I believe would be impacted by the decision to build in the Netherbarns site. Not only will the local wildlife, the fish, be affected by this build, but so will the natural surroundings that make this area appealing to fishing enthusiasts.

This also raises questions around how properties close to the proposed site would be affected by additional sewage works or needs for water support.

4) Access via Boleside road

This narrow, single track road is used today mainly by a small number of local residents and those enjoying the cycling and walking this area offers. This road is fit for this purpose, but is not suitable for increased traffic. There are no pavements, no suitable passing places, and the nature of either side of the road means further widening of the road isn't possible (and it shouldn't be for an area of natural beauty).

I believe there's an increased safety risk to those that use this road, based on where the proposed site entry is cited. This would increase traffic and safety risk in and around the Boleside road area, which as mentioned is used by cyclists, horse riders etc.

In summary:

Before confirming this site for the proposed build, I hope these various factors are considered. There's a natural and historic beauty to this area that can't be replaced once the building begins. This is one of the Borders' most loved and special spots. The various environmental, ecological, and safety concerns outlined deserve due consideration.

I ask to be kept informed on any changes or developments in these plans, as a local resident.

Dated: January 21, 2021

Best,
Nicola Evans and Liam Rutherford

