

Response ID ANON-VDDE-RA2K-K

Submitted to **Proposed Scottish Borders Local Development Plan**

Submitted on **2021-01-23 09:49:04**

About you

Are you responding as an: individual, group / organisation, agent?

Individual

Individual

What is your name?

Individual name:

██████████

What is your email address?

Individual Email:

██████████

What is your address?

██████████

██████████

Address line 2 :

Address line 3:

Town / city:

██████████

Postcode:

██████████

What is your contact telephone number?

Contact number:

██████████

Proposed Local Development Plan Menu

Where would you like to go?

Submit your response to the consultation (Exit)

Comment on Sites in Settlements F to H

Which Site are you commenting on?

Settlements F to H:

Galashiels: AGALA029: Netherbarns: Housing

What are your comments regarding this site?:

I object to the development of the Netherbarns site because I consider the outlook from Abbotsford to be of international significance because of the number of visitors that we receive. This site is a unique part of our local heritage and we need to protect the surroundings of this site over as large an area as possible to ensure no adverse effects which will diminish the value of this priceless heritage museum and the policies surrounding this site which are used by many members of the public for walking, socialising, and educational purposes as well as economic contribution to a part of the Scottish Borders which needs all the economic support it gets from all the visitors which come to Abotsford.

The LDP2 states: "These proposals confirm the site will not be visible from Abbotsford House during the Summer months and in the Winter months (when Abbotsford House is closed to the public) photomontages have shown that only fleeting views of very small parts of the site could be seen, but proposed housing (i.e. this would be a low density development of 45 units) would not be located within these visible locations"

This is incorrect for the following reasons:

a) It ignores the fragility of the mature tree screening on which the proposal is dependent, and which was made clear in Abbotsford's MIR objection of Feb 2019. This is based on professional advice received by the Trust with regard to management of the screening woodland in the Trust's ownership. It is highly likely that

sight lines to the development will be created as mature trees fall naturally or are felled as part of active woodland management.

b) It is incorrect to state that Abbotsford is closed in winter, and misleading to suggest by this statement that visits to Abbotsford in the winter are negligible:

- Abbotsford is now open annually in December.
- The Visitor Centre has been open all year round since 2014.
- Restoration of Scott's paths in 2018 has led to increased visits to Abbotsford's estate all year-round.
- A 'people counter' sited on the paths at Abbotsford (from summer 2020) recorded 13,000 visits in December 2020 alone, and 84,000 visits since it was introduced in mid July 2020.
- 30% of November & December visits are from dusk when lights from Netherbarns would be particularly visible through the thin tree cover.

Abbotsford has welcomed over 160,000 paying visitors from July 2014 – 2019. A sustained annual increase in visits of 82% (prior to Covid-19), contributing a total £7.4m to the local economy and supporting 148 jobs, as well as creating an additional 35 new jobs at Abbotsford.

In 2019, the Abbotsford Trust adopted a strategic plan which includes the following goal:

Our place in the Community: We will be a catalyst for improving the life of our region by creating opportunities to positively affect direct and indirect employment, skills and employability, mental health, social isolation, learning and sense of identity.

This goal is dependent on a number of long-term targets which include safeguarding Scott's landscape, improving the visitor experience, and increasing visits year round.

An eyesore and a building site when the eyes of the world are on Abbotsford for Scott's 250th Anniversary & Year of Scotland's Stories in 2021-2022?

We are grateful for the support of Scottish Government, the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency and VisitScotland towards celebrating Scott's 250th Anniversary in 2021-22. Celebrations are being planned by an international partnership of 54 organisations led by Abbotsford, with Abbotsford at the centre of the visitor experience.

But as the eyes of the world fall on Abbotsford during the 250th anniversary celebrations and the Year of Scotland's Stories in 2022, how will we explain the sights and sounds of diggers tearing up the view?

What would you like to do now?

Proposed Local Development Plan Menu (includes Exit option)