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Follow up. Completed on 30 January 2019.

From: Allan Swan <admin@bainswanarchitects.com>

Sent: Wed 30/01/2019 16:37

To: localplan

Cc:

Subject: Local Development Plan 2 - Main Issues Report: consultation responses 1 - 8

Message

1. Climate change.pdf 2. Allanton_Provision of Housing.pdf L01_ Allanton.pdf Allanton Response Note 8_17.pdf

3. Housing in the Countryside.pdf 4. Isolated houses of exceptional quality.pdf 5. Non farming_ forestry businesses.pdf 6. Coldingham Sands.pdf

L02 Coldingham Sands Site Location Plan.pdf Coldingham Sands Sketch 1 A3.pdf Creel House Pre-app supporting information.pdf 7. Row Housing.pdf

Dear Sirs,


I am attaching a series of consultation responses to the Main Issues Report as follows:-

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Documents attached</u>
1. Climate change	
2. Allanton: provision of housing land with:	: a location plan – L01 : our Response Note (8.17) to the 'Call for Sites' process in 2017
3. Housing in the Countryside Policy: suggested improvements	
4. Housing in the Countryside Policy: isolated houses of exceptional quality	
5. Housing in the Countryside Policy: non farming/forestry businesses	
6. Coldingham Sands: inappropriate use of Housing in the Countryside policy and Land adjacent to Creel House with:	: a location plan L02 : Sketch 1 : Pre-app Enquiry 25.10.18 - supporting text
7. Row Housing with:	: Row Housing paper, BSA 2006
8. Reston	

Yours sincerely,

Allan Swan

.....
Bain, Swan Architects

 Allan Swan

Coldingham Sands: inappropriate use of Housing in the Countryside policy

This representation is about the shortcomings of the current “Housing in the Countryside” policy when applied to a settlement like Coldingham Sands - which is not defined as a settlement in the Local Development Plan. But a village we surely have here for Coldingham Sands is now a settlement of 37 houses (counting the granted permissions at The Shieling and The Mount) strung around the bay stretching from Milldown Cottage to the south west to The Haven at the north east.

The “Housing in the Countryside” policy formulated around small building groups tends to be defined by largely 2 dimensional mechanistic considerations and is much too crude a tool. A more sensitive and sophisticated policy is required. This needs surely to be informed by urban design considerations including the architectural and spacial characteristics of the place and particularly by the character which the topography provides. To an extent these are qualitative matters but they are not immune to analysis which ought to draw from the evolution of village form in Berwickshire and elsewhere.

Such a policy might have queried the invasion of the public realm of the Sands by the Pavilion which cuckoo-like inhabits the lower public domain of the beach, one of Berwickshire’s premier places. It is not its contemporary persona that matters. It is that it elicits the public response “how dare it be there, this is our place”. Not for nothing are views of it in promotional material usually edited out. In time planting will soften the intrusion but the point is the policy mechanisms which applied were simply insufficient.

Complex though the arguments were at the time of the application, about replacing the Edwardian annex hut associated with The Haven the key consideration which derives from the three dimensional essence of the place was overlooked. It is though buildings started to appear in Princes Street Gardens, or indeed (as they have) in the front gardens of Bogan in Coldingham - a one sided street. A more thoughtful appreciation of urban space and form of the development is needed.

This is not to argue that a policy, properly informed by 3 dimensional urban design considerations should be wholly defensive. On the contrary, a rounder appreciation of the characteristics of the place can offer up opportunities for the kind of organic growth observable in our villages by anyone with the mind to look and learn. If the one sided Bogan in Coldingham did not exist the current policies would not allow it to be added to the village now. So although it might first be alarming if houses were built at the top of the brae in the gap between The Haven and St Veda’s overlooking the beach. But better there than at the bottom of the brae like The Pavilion, and well done, exploiting the drama which the topography provides, they would be at one with the essence of the place.

Lastly, we want to refer to another such opportunity in relation to the land adjacent to Creel House which is currently the subject of a Pre-App Enquiry 18/00625/PREAPP. Details are attached which we wish to be part of this representation. Strictly the enquiry is about only one house but it refers to the potential for the topography to absorb several houses fitted unobtrusively into the fold of the ground along the footway to the Creel Path making for a completely natural small extension to the village (see drawing L02).

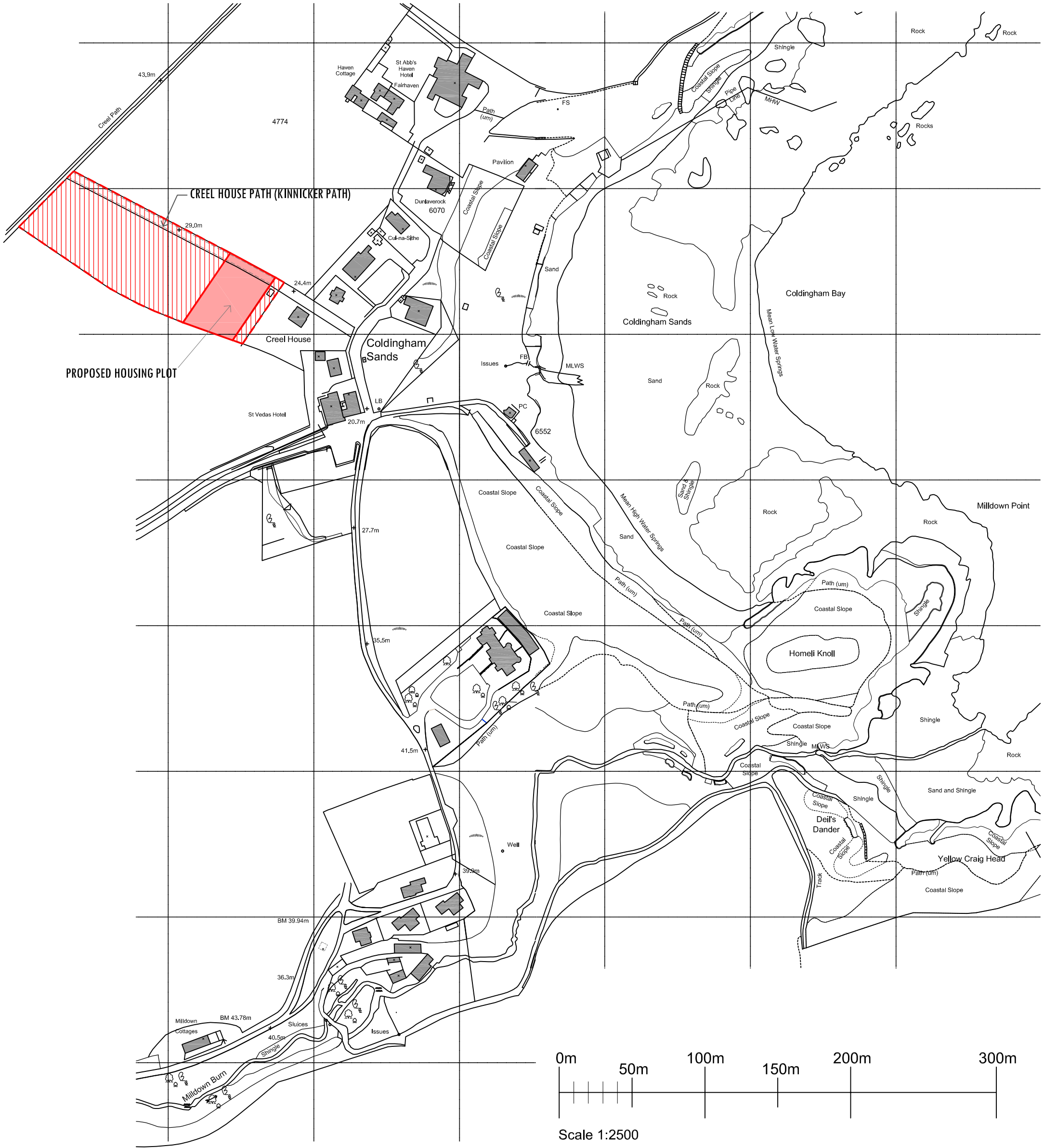
We need to accept that Coldingham Sands is a popular place to live. It has grown to its present size from the late 1800’s when there were only 2 or 3 scattered houses.

The planned Berwickshire expansion in the Local Development Plan has been slow in coming partly because many of the housing sites are large ones requiring large developers. But we continue to need more people so we need to find better ways of achieving better small scale expansion and why should some of this not be at Coldingham Sands where there appears to be a strong market for new houses?

How to achieve this? It seems to me there needs to be an input of urban design skills into the Local Development Plan process to help create a policy more suited to settlements like Coldingham Sands than the "Housing in the Countryside Policy".

A straightforward initial step would be to give Coldingham Sands the status of a village and we would argue for the village development boundary drawn to include the land adjacent to Creel House. In general though, some flexibility is required when determining development boundaries. Once a black line is drawn it can be a barrier to worthwhile development that was not conceived of when the Plan was compiled.

In parallel with your proposal for a more flexible policy for isolated houses in the countryside (refer para 5.14 of "Planning for Housing") where houses are of exceptional design quality, could something similar apply to village development where, although not anticipated in the preparation of the Local Development Plan, a development if it were high quality would enhance and compliment the local setting?



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Project
**Pre Application Enquiry - Proposed New Dwelling At
 Land Adjacent To, Creel House, Coldingham Sands**
 Drawing

LOCATION PLAN.

Date Scale Job No Drawing No
 Oct. 2018 1:2500. 5315. L/02.

Drawn by
 JRB

Checked by

Revision

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elevation
FROM NORTH EAST. A RELAXED ROW

concept

1. THE ADDITION OF A NEW PLACE TO THE COLDRINGHAM SANDS SETTLEMENT
2. A SMALL RURAL GROUP OF 5 HOUSES IN A RELAXED ROW FORMAT, ARRANGED TO CAPTURE COMMUNAL SPACE IN THE FORM OF A SMALL GREEN
3. THE GROUP IS STRONGLY CONTAINED BY THE TOPOGRAPHY WITH ONLY LONG VIEWS INWARDS FROM BLACKPOTS, HIGH UP TO THE WEST
4. SMALL HOUSES ARE APPROPRIATE - IN THE PATTERN OF COLDRINGHAM ROWS AT FISHERS DRAKE AND THE BOGAN
5. THE RIGHT OF WAY WOULD BE RETAINED PASSING THIS NEW PLACE ON THE WAY TO THE CREEL PATH
6. THE WILD GARDEN WOULD BE RETAINED AT THE WEST END - PERHAPS ENHANCED WITH PUBLIC ACCESS TO A CIRCULAR PATH AND A SITTING AREA ADDING RICHNESS TO THE PATH SYSTEM



WIDER ROAD AT JUNCTION
N
site layout
1:1000

view
FROM EAST

houses

3N:	3 BEDROOM	1 1/2 STOREY FAMILY HOUSES	105m ²
1N:	3 BEDROOM	1 STOREY FAMILY HOUSE	105m ²
1N:	2 BEDROOM	1 STOREY ELDERLY	70m ²

Creel House
COLDRINGHAM SANDS

PROPOSAL FOR SMALL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

PRELIMINARY SKETCH



BAIN SWAN ARCHITECTS
10/2012

A NEW 'PLACE' ON THE WAY UP TO THE CREEL PATH

THE RETURN LEG OF THE GROUP CONTAINS THE GREEN PROVIDING CLOSURE THE ROW IS ARRANGED

NEW PLANTING TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY OF ENCLOSURE

STRONG HEDGEROW CONTAINMENT UP NORTH SIDE OF SITE

NARROW SHARED SURFACE ACCESS ROAD - FORMED ALONG LINE OF EXISTING TRACK WITH PASSING WIDTHS AT EACH END

VISITOR PARKING AT GREEN WITH CIRCULAR SHARED SURFACE ACCESS TO HOUSES
LARGE VEHICLES TURNING

STRONG HEDGEROW CONTAINMENT ON THIS SIDE

STEEPLY RISING GROUND ON THIS SIDE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE CONTAINMENT

RIGHT OF WAY BETWEEN HIGH HEDGES

RIGHT OF WAY BETWEEN EXISTING HEDGES

CREEL PATH TO ST. ABBS

WILD MEADOW GARDEN

CIRCULAR PATH

WILD MEADOW GARDEN

CIRCULAR PATH

CREEL PATH TO COLDRINGHAM - ST. ABBS ROAD

CREEL PATH

PERHAPS A SITTING-VIEWING AREA WITH PUBLIC ACCESS

Proposed Dwelling at Land Adjacent to Creel House, Coldingham Sands



Pre-App Enquiry

Allan Swan. Bain, Swan Architects. October 2018

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Please read in conjunction with drawings L01 and L02

The applicants are owners of the land at Coldingham Sands and wish to obtain Planning Permission in Principle for a house. They have requested us to make this pre-application enquiry.

1. Housing plot

The strip of land is of approximate dimensions 45 x 160m (see dwg. L01) behind Creel House, Coldingham Sands. It is not in agricultural use, and amounts to a small grass paddock at the end of the Creel House garden.

The ground is contained within a distinctive fold in the topography, rising quite steeply to the south west and contained on the north east by vigorous tall hedges which mark a pedestrian path (a Right of Way) to the Creel Path to the north west. Creel Path is an ancient footpath linking St Abbs with Coldingham. The inside hedge is comparatively new, established by the applicants - the footpath used to go through the field without any definition on the south west side. The applicants refer to this as Creel House path and it seems also known as Kinnicker Path. The hedge on the south west side was located to allow vehicular access to the field beyond the Creel Path to the north west. Creel Path is an ancient footpath linking St Abbs with Coldingham.

This enquiry is in respect of a possible housing plot at the south east end, either adjacent to the garden boundary of Creel House, or astride it if that would be of any advantage.

2. Vehicular access

Access to the plot would be obtained by a new private access road on the line of the track on the north east side of Creel House which emerges on the road to the Haven. The track is in the ownership of the applicants so the current boundary on the north east side of Creel House could be adjusted as required. The Right of Way would continue.

3. Planning policy

It is appreciated that the Council has no other policy with which to assess development proposals at Coldingham Sands other than the current Housing in the Countryside Policy, and its various mechanisms including small building groups. A doctrinal interpretation of the Housing in the Countryside Policy probably does not give rise to confident expectation of a successful outcome to this enquiry since the addition of a house here might be construed as a departure from the existing settlement pattern extending beyond the current garden boundaries into adjoining ground and therefore not in accordance with policy.

On the other hand there is plenty of precedent of double depth development with one house behind another in Berwickshire villages and the grass paddock is not an agricultural field as such.

A village we surely have here for Coldingham Sands is now a settlement of 37 houses (counting those granted permission at The Shieling and The Mount) strung around the bay stretching from Milldown Cottage to the south west round to the Haven at the north east. The Housing in the Countryside Policy, whatever its value within the countryside cannot be said to provide much guidance or encouragement when it comes to village form.

The building group mechanism was surely never intended for this sort of settlement and is an inadequate tool to use on its own for the purpose of achieving contextual, sympathetic infill development or small scale expansion. If the row of houses at the Bogan in Coldingham did not exist the policy would not now support it. Also, artificial construct that it is, it is much too mechanistic to operate well in a settlement such as this where the landscape form is a primary force. Something is needed that springs from a broader appreciation of the way the buildings at Coldingham Sands interact with one another and more especially with the landscape. The perils of applying a set of rules without taking account of the important spacial subtleties of belonging are well illustrated by the Pavilion which, cuckoo like, impinges on the public domain of the beach, one of Berwickshire's premier places. It is not its contemporary persona that matters. It is that it elicits the public response "how dare it be there, this is our place". Not for nothing are views of it in promotional material always edited out. In time its planting will soften the intrusion but the point is the policy mechanisms which applied were simply insufficient. A more nuanced and sophisticated appreciation of the (urban) space and form of the settlement is required.

We need to accept that Coldingham Sands is a popular place to live. It has grown to its present size from the late 1800's when there were only two or three houses. The planned Berwickshire expansion in the Local development Plan has been slow in coming and we continue to need more people so we need to find better ways of achieving better quality small scale expansion and why should some of this not be at Coldingham Sands?

A good way to approach this is by appreciating what it is that makes up the character of the place; these houses obtain their essence from being at the top of the brae overlooking the sands; these houses derive their sense of place from being grouped on the site of a farm steading alongside the Dean at the Milldown Burn - and so on. In each case the topography is a key component of the sense of place.

This enquiry is about one house but the part the topography plays in the village context suggests that exploiting the topography here would be a way of fitting several houses unobtrusively into the fold of the ground along the footway to the Creel Path making for a completely natural small extension to the village.

This argument for more sensitivity where Coldingham Sands is concerned, in essence the exercise by Development Management itself of the kind of placemaking skills SBC advocates in its SPG 'Placemaking and Design' is one we have put forward in the 'Call for Sites' process attached to the Main Issues Report.

We attach our submission for information.

Martin Wanless, when I spoke to him before he left, welcomed the suggestion of a more relevant policy for places like Coldingham Sands. When I rang recently, nobody could recall our submission so I agreed to send it in again during the forthcoming consultation period associated with the Local Development Plan Main Issues Report. I hope this is not an illustration of dwindling appreciation of the importance of a strong three dimensional element of urban (I wish there were a better adjective) design in planning.

In the circumstances might there be merit in this proposal for one house if it were designed to fit into a sympathetic overall master plan for several additional houses in a place of their own strung out informally up the fold in the ground alongside the route to the Creel Path, thereby facilitating a modest amount of environmentally acceptable future growth?

We would very much like to engage with you on this and look forward to hearing from you.