

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 January 2019 16:25
To: localplan <localplan@scotborders.gov.uk>
Subject: Letter of Objection to proposed housind development at Netherbarns AGALA029

Dear Sir/Madam,

Netherbarns AGALA029

I am strongly opposed to the proposal to build 45 houses at Netherbarns.

The issue cannot be reduced to being just about the views, seasonal or otherwise, from Abbotsford House. Protecting the Setting of Abbotsford is about more than just hiding a housing estate behind curtains of tree-planting along the south-eastern boundary of the site.

The Setting would still be shamefully compromised—for visitors, including those heading for the Eildon and Leaderfoot National Scenic Area, arriving along the A7 from the Selkirk direction; from the historic Designed Landscape and its footpaths, now enjoyed all year round by increasing numbers of walkers and visitors to Abbotsford; and from the surrounding hills.

I am exasperated that the Council and the Developer/Owners are once again pursuing the idea of suburban development at Netherbarns—which has four times in the last twelve years been found against at Public Inquiry/Local Plan Examination.

I consider it inappropriate for Galashiels to spread further over the Kingsknowes ‘shoulder’ into land associated with the Area of Great Landscape Value; and further upstream in relation to the Tweed, which is not the natural water valley of the town.

Such a housing estate would be inappropriate in character and scale; however a small, landscaped build of just several houses with associated features, such as orchards, woodland or stables, would provide a softening of the town’s present hard edge at Kingsknowe and be an appropriate transition between town and countryside.

I believe that the conclusions of the last Public Inquiry, reported on by [REDACTED] in 2015, remain definitive:-

“ Despite the lack of a formal objection by Historic Scotland, I concur with the conclusions reached at the previous local plan inquiry. It appears to me that cultural and landscape considerations combine to provide an asset which should remain free of the impact of the suggested allocation and any subsequent development of Netherbarns. I do not accept that the woodland screening would adequately mitigate the adverse impacts of the allocation on the setting of the house or the designed landscape. Additionally, the re-opening of the railway link to Galashiels is likely to increase the volume of visitors to Abbotsford, therefore further strengthening the need to protect the heritage of the vicinity.”

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Melrose
Scottish Borders