

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED UNDER POWERS DELEGATED TO  
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER**

**PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)**

**REF :** 17/01406/FUL

**APPLICANT :** Mr And Mrs D Gold

**AGENT :** Kanak Bose Ltd

**DEVELOPMENT :** Erection of dwellinghouse with attached garage

**LOCATION:** Land North West Of Alderbank  
Macbiehill  
West Linton  
Scottish Borders

**TYPE :** FUL Application

**REASON FOR DELAY:**

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**DRAWING NUMBERS:**

<b>Plan Ref</b>	<b>Plan Type</b>	<b>Plan Status</b>
OGS 265 02	Site Plan	Refused
OGS 265 01	Location Plan	Refused
OGS 265 03	Floor Plans	Refused
OGS 265 04	Elevations	Refused
OGS 265 05	Sections	Refused

**NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 0**

**SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:**

No representations received.

Consultations were carried out with: Roads - A number of applications have been made for this site. The current submission sits further back in the plot so the length of the private track serving the site is increased. No objections but the parking for 2 vehicles must be provided prior to occupation of the dwelling and the parking retained in perpetuity. A section of the track to the plot must be upgraded to withstand a minimum axel loading of 14 tonnes prior to occupation; Environmental Health - No objection. Conditions and informative suggested; Education and Lifelong Learning - a contribution for Peebles high School would be required if granted; the Coal Authority - the site does not lie within the Development High Risk Area; SEPA - no objection.

**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:**

PMD2 - Quality standards  
HD2 - Housing in the countryside  
HD3 - Protection of residential amenity  
EP13 - Trees, woodlands and hedgerows  
IS2 - Developer contributions  
IS7 - Parking provision and standards  
IS9 - Waste water treatment and sustainable urban drainage

The site is not strategic, therefore the policies contained within SESplan are not considered.

The following council guidance is material  
Landscape and development  
New housing in the Borders countryside  
Placemaking and design  
Privacy and sunlight guide  
Trees and Development  
Development Contributions

**Recommendation by** - Ranald Dods (Planning Officer) on 1st December 2017

#### Site and proposal

The site is approximately 800m north of the A701 and is accessed from a private road some 300m long which runs westwards from the unclassified public road. Macbiehill is within the countryside and is in an elevated position, with the ground level rising from the A701. A number of properties lie to the south of the application site and, due to the topography, they are at a lower level than the application site. The eaves of the property immediately to the south east of the site (known as Alderbank) would be below the finished floor level of the proposed house. The site itself is undeveloped land on which there is some planting and an area of gravel hardstanding. Beyond the site boundary lies rough grazing ground which is in the applicant's ownership. The application site measures 3500m<sup>2</sup> and, at its fullest is 70m by 58m with the long dimension being orientated roughly north west to south east. The application is for a dwellinghouse with attached garage.

#### Principle

There is an existing building group at Macbiehill and housing up to a total of 2 or 30% may be approved whichever is greater during the current Local Plan period. Alderbank was approved and built during the previous local plan period. There is currently an application (16/00709/FUL) for a new dwellinghouse within the walled garden to the south which is awaiting the conclusion of a legal agreement. If both the current applications were to be approved, this would bring the number of new dwellings approved during the current local plan period to two, which would comply with this part of policy HD2.

A number of other applications have been made but were withdrawn prior to determination. All called into question the suitability of the site for residential development.

Two similar applications for a house on this area of ground have recently been refused. Those were: 16/01319/FUL which was refused on 15 December 16 and; 17/00530/FUL which was refused permission by the Local Review Body (LRB) on 30 August 17. The LRB considered that whilst the site proposed in that application related well to the existing pattern of development at Macbiehill and that they were content with the design and appearance of the proposed house, the relationship to Alderbank was unacceptable. That would lead to the house proposed in that application having an overbearing and dominating impact on the existing property due to its proximity and elevation. During their site visit, LRB Members noted that there was a difference in level between the site and the adjoining property "Alderbank" which had been accentuated through the creation of the development platform for that property.

The current application site is significantly different from that contained within 17/00530/FUL. Previously the site was approximately 2650 m<sup>2</sup>, with the broadest dimensions being 35m wide by 79m long and the long dimension orientated roughly north east to south west. The current application site measures 3500m<sup>2</sup> and, at its fullest is 70m by 58m with the long dimension now being orientated roughly north west to south east. The location of the proposed house has moved 28m further north west from the location contained within 17/00530/FUL. Although the increased site area has allowed the applicant to address the overbearing relationship with Alderbank, it has moved the house further away from the existing building group and further into undeveloped land by approximately metres.

The council's supplementary planning guidance (SPG) "New housing in the Borders countryside" states that 'Sites should not normally break into previously undeveloped fields...'. The application site lies in such an area of undeveloped ground, beyond which lies rough grazing which is in the control of the applicant. For this reason, the proposed dwellinghouse does not comply with guidance for housing in the countryside. The

existing building group creates a sense of place at Macbiehill of a tight knit group of residential properties. The remote and elevated position of the proposed house would be at odds with the established pattern of development. While it is acknowledged that the LRB previously accepted development in this area, this site now positions the house further away from the group. It is not considered that the principle of development on this site complies with Policy HD2 or our supplementary guidance.

#### Services

Foul drainage would be by means of a septic tank and soakaways rather than via the public drainage network. The applicant intends to make a connection to the public water supply.

#### Landscape

There are trees to the north east of the site but those are clear of the proposed house location. There are some young trees on the site which may be affected by the development and, although currently of little amenity value due to their age and sparse planting pattern, replacement planting could be required by condition if permission was granted.

There is no reference in the proposals to the required planting, which was agreed as a condition on the consent for Alderbank. An area of tree planting is shown along the mutual boundary with Alderbank and along the south western boundary as well as various references on the site plan to "trees" but no specific detail is given for any of those items. If properly specified, planting between the properties could provide some screening although it would take time to establish.

#### Access and parking

There is ample space on site to provide parking and comply with parking standards. Access would be by means of a private road although the track leading to the site would need to be upgraded to take a 14 tonne axel loading. That could be required by condition if permission was granted.

#### Design and layout

The house would be single storey in an "L" shape. It would have a large area of flat roof approximately 4m above ground level and 1.5m above the eaves, with a pitched section of roof to the eaves. Whilst that reduces the height of the building, it gives it a squat appearance and this is at odds with the properties in the existing building group and is unacceptable. As such, it would be detrimental to the appearance of that group. A condition could, however, be imposed to require its modification, if consent were to be granted. Solar panels would be located on the southern facing pitched sections of roof and there would be a stainless steel flue. Saving the change to the roof, some minor changes to fenestration and detailing of the external materials, the house design is the same as the previous application (17/00530/FUL). Setting aside the unacceptable appearance created by the flat roof, the materials proposed for the house would not be out of keeping with Alderbank and the other properties beyond.

As set out earlier, there are significant differences between this and the previous application is the site and the location of the proposed house. The location of the house would be some 42m to the north west of Alderbank. In addition, the planting which is required on the mutual boundary with Alderbank will further emphasise the degree of remoteness from the existing building group. The proposal creates a linear development and a gap site between the two properties. The proposed layout does not relate well to the existing properties or building group, a problem accentuated by the level difference between the building group and the development platform on the site.

#### Amenity

The proposed house, by virtue of being 42m from Alderbank, would not impact adversely on the amenity of that property. The level difference is a concern for privacy within garden ground and, if granted, a condition requiring landscaping on the mutual boundary should be imposed. Although that planting would protect the amenity of residents, it would further isolate the proposed house from the existing building group.

#### Contributions

A contribution would be required for education provision if permission were to be granted. That would be secured by means of a legal agreement.

#### Conclusion

Although the applicant has addressed the issue of overbearing appearance, the location of the house being remote from the building group (some 42m from Alderbank), still creates a tension with policy and guidance.

This will not contribute to the sense of place created by the compact and low nature of the former farm steading buildings and building group to the south. The previous site was sized and orientated in a way which was assessed by the LRB as being well related to the pattern of development at Macbiehill. This application site is significantly different in terms of size and the location of the proposed house. Instead of the site and house being well related to the pattern of development, this proposal will see the house being physically remote from the existing group. The development platform will further emphasise this separation. In addition, development will creep into undeveloped land beyond the existing building group, creating additional pressure for further development. The effect would be an adverse effect on the character and setting of the building group.

The proposed house represents a linear form of development which is located in an open area of undeveloped ground, it does not relate well to the existing building group and is not sympathetic to the character of that building group in terms of its siting. The proposal is contrary to policy HD2, council guidance on "New housing in the Borders countryside" and "Placemaking and design".

#### **REASON FOR DECISION :**

The proposed development does not relate well to the existing building group due to its location in undeveloped ground, in an elevated position and being remote from the existing building group. This would have an adverse effect on the character and setting of the building group. The proposal is contrary to policy HD2, council guidance on "New housing in the Borders countryside" and "Placemaking and design".

#### **Recommendation: Refused**

- 1 The proposed development does not relate well to the existing building group due to its location in undeveloped ground, in an elevated position and being remote from the existing building group. This would have an adverse effect on the character and setting of the building group. The proposal is contrary to policy HD2, council guidance on "New housing in the Borders countryside" and "Placemaking and design".

**“Photographs taken in connection with the determination of the application and any other associated documentation form part of the Report of Handling”.**