

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

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

PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)

REF : 18/01332/PPP

APPLICANT : Mr & Mrs T Ferguson

AGENT : Ferguson Planning

DEVELOPMENT : Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage/stable

LOCATION: Land North East Of River Cottage
Linthill
Melrose
Scottish Borders

TYPE : PPP Application

REASON FOR DELAY:

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Plan Ref	Plan Type	Plan Status
	Location Plan	Refused

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 1
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

One comment in support of the application has been received, which advises that this neighbour has no concerns provided the development is set back in the field and adequate privacy can be maintained by a suitable boundary hedge and planting trees/shrubs.

Roads Planning Section: does not object subject to conditions being imposed to require: (a) a scheme of details to describe the achievement of specified visibility improvement works at the access from the B6359; and (b) details of the extension to the private access including alignment and construction specification. It is noted that the required works would involve land outwith the Applicants' control, therefore they need to demonstrate that they have the ability to provide this road safety improvement. It is noted that the Planning Statement submitted as part of the current application, intimates that improvement works to the access are imminent. However, it is advised, it would still be prudent to condition these works as part of this application, albeit as a suspensive condition.

Ecology Section: does not object subject to planning conditions being imposed to require that prior to determination of any subsequent full planning application, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) should be submitted, which incorporates: (a) measures to protect the freshwater environment, including the River Tweed SAC; (b) mitigation measures to avoid potential impacts on protected species that may be present on site, including bats, badgers and red squirrel; and (c) measures to enhance biodiversity through planting native tree species of local provenance. Further, it seeks a condition to require that no development should commence during the breeding bird season (March - August inclusive) unless in strict compliance with a Species Protection Plan for breeding birds that has first been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority, and which includes provision for mitigation and a pre-development checking survey.

Scottish Natural Heritage: objects unless proposal is made subject to conditions that require works to be carried out in strict accordance with the mitigation detailed in SNH's appraisal. The latter requires the achievement of a 10m buffer between the top of the river bank and any proposed buildings (but not the driveway).

Landscape Section: does not object subject to standard conditions being imposed to require the provision of soft landscaping details; to regulate commencement and completion of landscaping and to conserve existing trees. A proposed informative is recommended to refer the Applicant to BS: 5837 (2012). Within its assessment, the Landscape Section specifically notes the following:

(a) the proposed dwellinghouse sits towards the north end of a large site which would keep the integrity of the built form of the group. For this reason, it is not considered that there would be a detrimental impact on the Designed Landscape, Listed buildings or wider building group from this proposal;

(b) the proposed location has potential to impact on the adjacent trees, and should planning permission in principle be considered, a condition would be sought to require a Tree Survey to be undertaken in accordance with BS 5837:2012 to establish the location and condition and Root Protection Area (RPA) of all trees that have potential to be affected by this development;

(c) the proposal to create a robust boundary along the east side of the site, which could include some boundary trees within the hedge line, is welcomed. A detailed Planting Plan should be required under a condition of any consent;

(d) the access drawing shows amendments to the entrance off the B6359. There are no concerns about moving the fence to improve visibility as long as any replacement fence is similar to the existing fence. However, the removal of any of the existing hedge on the roadside to the north of the access, is concerning. As this is an existing entrance and the proposal is for only one additional dwellinghouse, the removal of any hedgerow would be disproportionate to the scale of development. (It is suggested that the front face of the hedge might be cut back hard to achieve the desired visibility splay); and

(e) any proposed bin store should be tucked away behind the hedge out of sight of the passing traffic; should be as simple as possible, should avoid a turning area; and should only be accessed by residents and refuse collection, from a single path off the driveway (and not through the hedge) in order to minimise the visual impact. The base to the bin store and access path should be compacted and bound hardcore only to assist natural drainage.

Environmental Health, Community Council, Education and Lifelong Learning and Scottish Water were also consulted, but have not responded to the public consultation.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN - Adopted Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (2016)

PMD1: Sustainability

PMD2: Quality Standards

HD2: Housing in the Countryside

HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity

EP1: International Nature Conservation Sites and Protected Species

EP2: National Nature Conservation Sites and Protected Species

EP3: Local Biodiversity

EP5: Special Landscape Areas

EP7: Listed Buildings

EP8: Archaeology

EP10: Gardens and Designed Landscapes

EP13: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

IS2: Developer Contributions

IS7: Parking Provision and Standards

IS9: Waste Water Treatment and Sustainable Urban Drainage

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

- Placemaking and Design (2010)

- Development Contributions (January 2018 update)

- New Housing in the Borders Countryside (2008)

Recommendation by - Stuart Herkes (Planning Officer) on 26th November 2018

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is open agricultural land immediately adjacent to the easternmost property of the building group at Linthill; specifically "River Cottage" (which is referred to in the Planning Statement as "Gardeners Cottage"). In common with the aforementioned building group, the site is also within the Designed Landscape at Linthill, and lies immediately above the southern bank of the Ale Water. Excepting a dilapidated field shelter to the north, the land within the site is otherwise an open field, which slopes perceptibly downwards from northwest to southeast.

The Planning Authority has previously defined the building group at Linthill as consisting of: "River Cottage"; the new-build dwelling "Garden House", which lies within the Linthill Walled Garden; and the five dwellings accommodated within the conversion of the former stable block further west, and on the opposite (western) side of the main access road from the walled garden and "River Cottage". The aforementioned road, stables building and walled garden are major structural components which articulate the form of this building group, along with the wooded bank of the Ale Water to the north. (The Applicants identify Linthill House as a possible inclusion within the building group, but the Planning Authority has not previously accepted this definition. Linthill House discernibly lies at some remove from the group and on the opposite side of the Ale Water. Notwithstanding the historical links, it does not reasonably inhabit the same landscape setting as the building group).

With respect to the setting of the building group at Linthill, the area to the west is substantially more wooded, whereas land to the east and south is open fields. The application site essentially occurs within the latter, being within the western extremity of the field that is nearest to the eastern edge of the building group; specifically the eastern boundary of "River Cottage".

In addition to the Designed Landscape Designation, the Walled Garden itself, and the stables buildings at Linthill Cottages are all Listed Buildings.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Applicants propose that a new house and associated detached garage/stables building should be located on the site.

Although the application is for Planning Permission in Principle, indicative floor plans for the house, and an indicative siting for both proposed buildings, are described. This indicative layout described on both the location plan and site plan, shows the buildings sited on the higher (northwest) part of the site, essentially on the same crest as "River Cottage". (No indicative elevation drawings are included).

The Applicants have indicated an intention to carry out landscaping works, particularly the planting of a new hedge along the eastern side of the proposed area of new garden ground. Some individual tree planting along this same boundary is also indicated, such that there might be an occasional tree reinforcing this new eastern edge to the property. They further intend to take ownership of the remainder of the field, which they would maintain as a paddock for horses. No new larger shelter belt or woodland area is indicated.

Although not part of their own application, it is advised that the site's current owners have an intention to upgrade the existing road junction between the private access and the public road within the next few weeks. Therefore it is anticipated in the application that any requisite upgrade to allow safe road access would be delivered outwith the current proposal.

PLANNING HISTORY

The land was previously part of a much larger area that was the site of a previous application (14/00569/PPP) for a new house to the east of Linthill. This application was withdrawn before it could be determined.

Applications relating to garden ground at "River Cottage" to the immediate west of the site, are also relevant. Until recently the wider field in which the site is located, was an undeveloped field, the western

boundary of which was defined by a robust hedge and mature trees. However, the owners of "River Cottage" secured planning consent, firstly, to change the use of the western extremity of the field to garden ground for inclusion within the curtilage of their existing residential property (Planning Consent 15/00199/FUL). More recently, Planning Consent 16/00252/FUL approved a detached outbuilding within part of this same area of land.

The aforementioned application was necessary because a condition on Planning Consent 15/00199/FUL had explicitly removed householder permitted development rights from the subject land. This condition was imposed to safeguard the character, appearance and setting of the site and surrounding area, including the building group at Linthill. The outbuilding is now existing and no strong boundary has been created between the new area of garden ground and the remainder of the field. However, none was required under any conditions imposed upon either of Planning Consents 15/00199/FUL or 16/00252/FUL.

On the one hand, as the Applicants note, the field in which they now propose to site their new house may no longer be reasonably characterised as 'undeveloped' given the erection of the aforementioned outbuilding. However, on the other, the Planning Authority took a view at the time of its assessments of the two previous proposals on the merits of these specific proposals, which did not reasonably or necessarily allow for, or entail, any assessment of the principle of the building group per se, being extended further to the east, so much as whether the land could be accommodated acceptably as additional garden ground for "River Cottage". As such, the current application is the first occasion since the issuing of Planning Consents 15/00199/FUL and 16/00252/FUL, at which the Planning Authority is being called upon to make an assessment about the principle of the building group at Linthill being augmented and extended as proposed. The aforementioned approvals relating to garden ground at "River Cottage" are therefore not reasonably characterised as any acquiescence on the part of the Planning Authority to any view that the building group is now reasonably extended in the way, or direction, that is now proposed. On the contrary, these matters now require to be considered fully and directly for the first time within the context of the assessment of this current application.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

There is a building group of seven dwellings at Linthill. No new dwellings have been approved in relation to it since the start of the current Local Development Plan period, which was commenced in May 2016.

Under Policy HD2 then, there is potential in principle for the existing building group to be augmented by a new dwellinghouse during the current Local Development Plan period, in accordance with the requirements of Section A of the Policy HD2 of the Approved Local Development Plan. However, and in accordance with the same Section (A) of that same policy, there is though an ulterior requirement to consider the specific proposals, and to consider whether or not what is specifically proposed here, would in fact be an acceptable addition to the building group.

In this respect, Policy HD2 specifically requires: (i) that the site should be well related to that building group; (ii) that the cumulative impact of new development on the character of the building group, landscape and amenity of the surrounding area should not cause unacceptable adverse impacts; and (iii) that the proposal should be appropriate in scale, siting, design, access, and materials, and should be sympathetic to the character of the building group. It is a further requirement under Policy HD2 relating to all Sections of the same policy, including Section A, that there should be compliance with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance where it meets the terms of Policy HD2 and development must not negatively impact on landscape and existing communities, including any cumulative effects.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE BUILDING GROUP

In that it is contiguous with the boundary of an existing residential property ("River Cottage") which is recognised to be within the building group at Linthill, I am content that the site is alongside a building group that is itself capable of augmentation by one additional dwellinghouse during the current Local Development Plan Period. It therefore remains to be considered whether or not this proposal, as an addition to the building group, would have any unacceptable impacts upon the character of the group; the landscape and amenity of the surrounding area; and/or would otherwise negatively impact upon the amenity or environment of the site and surrounding area, including local communities.

Besides noting the potential for any future detailed design to be sympathetic to local built form; the physical proximity of the site to neighbouring dwellings; and the potential for intervisibility between the site and neighbouring dwellings, there is no detailed assessment within the application's supporting details of how the proposal might otherwise be contained within, and contribute positively towards, the prevailing sense of place of the building group at Linthill. Instead, much weight is placed within the supporting statement, firstly, on the relative seclusion of the site in landscape terms, and secondly, on the ability of new landscaping to re-make a robust and defensible eastern boundary to, and for, the building group at Linthill.

With respect to the first point, and contrary to the Applicant's consideration that the site is not widely visible from the surrounding area, I would observe that it is in fact capable of being seen at a distance, including in views from the public road to the southwest. It does not therefore exist as any discreet opportunity to accommodate a house within a building group without this being liable to have repercussions for the sense of place and setting of the building group. Accordingly, such considerations are not readily set aside in the way that the supporting statement anticipates. These aspects of the proposal are considered in more detail in the sections below.

With respect to the second point, and while the Applicants would certainly and reasonably be required to deliver a new landscaped eastern site boundary in the event of approval, the potential to do so is not in itself reasonably considered to be a significant determining factor in this or any other case where a defensible edge to the building group already exists in planning terms. The potential to create or re-establish a boundary (even in an enhanced or reinforced form) is seldom a strong or positive factor in favour of a building group being expanded. Moreover, a simple agricultural hedge reinforced by a line of trees (as is indicated) is unlikely in itself to be a particularly robust new edge to the building group. It is accepted that the Applicants would nonetheless have the ability to deliver a new and improved eastern edge to the building group (were one required by condition). However, a more fundamental point is whether or not the expansion of the building group in the way and in the direction proposed, would in itself be acceptably in character with the prevailing sense of place of the building group at Linthill.

Accordingly, support for the principle of this proposal does not reasonably rise or fall on how well-screened the site is in landscape terms and/or upon the Applicants' ability to form a new robust landscaped eastern boundary for the site and building group. More fundamentally, it needs to be considered whether or not the development of the site would be in accordance with the character and sense of place of the group at Linthill.

IMPACTS UPON THE CHARACTER AND SENSE OF PLACE OF THE BUILDING GROUP

The lack of a strong existing boundary feature to the east of the existing building group is certainly material to the current assessment, but for the reasons set out above in the planning history section, this fact does not outweigh the need for a fully informed and considered view being taken with respect to whether or not what is proposed is - or is not - reasonably in character with the building group at Linthill.

Structurally, the building group at Linthill Cottages is a group of dwellings based within and around a group of estate buildings. It has a relatively compact form, being based upon the converted stables block and dwellings within and around the walled garden. These buildings are salient to the definition of the building group, and form a clear nucleus to which all properties within the group, are closely relatable, either directly or in their immediate proximity to these structures. Crucially, the application site has no immediate relationship to either the walled garden or stables. It would lie on the opposite side of a property ("River Cottage") that does have such a relationship with the walled garden. In this way, the proposal would in fact uniquely occupy an outlying position relative to the walled garden and stables; which is to say, lacking the immediate connection and/or proximity that all constituent dwellings within the building group currently exhibit relative to these aforementioned structures.

The building group is moreover, bounded to the north by the riverbank, and then, beyond the stables and walled garden, by trees and open fields on all other sides. The site lies to the east, within this aforementioned setting of open fields. While a development of the site would reasonably respect the existing northern and southern parameters of the building group, the land to the immediate east is completely open and undefined (being the remainder of the field itself). As such, there is no existing, let alone established, landscaped setting to the east of the site - at least, not until the eastern boundary of the aforementioned field, which lies around 150m to the east of the application site. Therefore, and unless a completely new - currently non-existent - and sufficiently substantial landscaped boundary were to be

created along the eastern boundary of the application site, it follows that this current proposal would be liable to promote a wider expansion of the building group, eastwards into the remainder of the field. This would not be in keeping with the compact form of the building group within and around the traditional estate buildings and structures of the stables and walled garden. It would instead take the group into and over its own landscape setting, without any immediate, natural or even artificial limit to constitute any logical or natural edge to expansion in this direction. Any new boundary could in itself take years to establish and, in the meantime, the remainder of the field could be subject to sufficient pressure for further expansion of the group.

In such circumstances - where there is essentially no strong defensible boundary or edge between the existing building group and the open countryside - there is no reasonable basis for accepting or promoting development beyond the existing edge contrary to the character and sense of place of the building group. I am aware that there is potential to require the Applicant to establish a new tree belt or other landscaped boundary to constitute a new robust landscaped edge to the group, but any allowance for housing to be added incrementally like this, would nonetheless be liable to promote a wider expansion of new housing across the remainder of the field to its eastern boundary on the basis that any proposed successor boundary is no more arbitrary than any that might now be created in relation to the current proposal.

In summary, any expansion to the east, into the surrounding fields, and setting of the existing building group, would not be in character with the existing group, and would be detrimental to its established sense of place. This might ultimately result in the building group being given an exaggerated linear, even ribbon form, which is not discernible at present. Buildings and dwellings, while liable to be encountered sequentially along the access road, are often obscured by walls or trees such that they are not obviously within any linear form, and there is consequently no strong sense of moving along a row or ribbon of houses above the river bank, so much as following the perimeter of the walled garden. Further, housing on the site and to the east, would have no immediate, direct or discernible connection with the walled garden or any other estate buildings at Linthill. It would instead be liable to register as a 'breakout' into the field behind the building group onto land that is out with all that is structurally salient in defining and articulating the sense of place of Linthill as a building group, and which more reasonably belongs in the setting of the building group. In conclusion, I consider that this proposal would have an unacceptably adverse impact upon the sense of place of the building group at Linthill, and that this current proposal should be refused on this basis.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACTS

The Landscape Section was specifically consulted to advise upon the acceptability or otherwise of the impacts of the proposal upon the Designed Landscape at Linthill; and not to consider the relationship of the site to the building group which I have assessed above.

It is accepted - and agreed - that subject to the conditions recommended by Landscape being imposed, there would be no unacceptable impacts upon the Designed Landscape at Linthill or upon the Listed Buildings within the building group there. However, although the Landscape Section takes a view on the potential for the site to be integrated into the building group through appropriate new landscaping along the eastern boundary, I do not consider - for the reasons set out above - that this reasonably outweighs the concern that the site should be contained within, and well-related to, the established and prevailing character and sense of place of the building group at Linthill.

Although both the Applicants and the Landscape Section note the relatively well contained context of the site in landscape and visual terms, I would point out that the site is in fact visible from the surrounding area, including from the B6359 and B6400 to the southwest, where it is discernible against a backdrop of trees adhering to the river bank, with Linthill in the foreground. Given the more open nature of the land here, any particularly large or unusual development would be liable to draw the eye and challenge the keen sense of Linthill as a group of buildings based at and around a walled garden and surrounding estate buildings.

I concur that new landscaping along the lines identified by the Landscape Section would allow in time at least, that the development might find some inclusion within a new shared landscape setting with Linthill. However, this potential for the generation of a new landscaped setting does not in itself reasonably outweigh the concern already noted above, that the proposal should inhabit the existing sense of place of the building group to begin with. Further, the potential for greater eastwards expansion of development would undermine any mitigation that might be provided in relation to this proposal by a new landscaped boundary

and replacement eastern edge of the building group, were the eastern boundary simply to 'travel' eastwards across the field in response to incremental proposed new-build additions to this side of the building group.

CONSERVATION OF EXISTING TREES

Landscape has also highlighted the logic in the proposed house being located within the northern part of the site, but this is also the most visible area in views from the public roads, and the closest to existing trees. I acknowledge though, that through a carefully considered and properly informed design and layout, there is liable to be a way to ensure that existing trees would not be unduly impacted by construction in this area. Any detailed proposals would reasonably be required by conditions to take full and proper account of this aspect of developing this particular - and in landscape terms, particularly sensitive - area of the site. As the Landscape Section advises, there would also be a need for a professionally conducted and reported Tree Survey in support of any detailed proposals to ensure that existing woodlands to the north would be appropriately protected from development.

CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

As noted, the site and indeed, the building group at Linthill, is within the Linthill Designed Landscape, while the stables and walled garden are Listed structures. Given Landscape's assessment, I am content that the current proposal would not have any unacceptably detrimental impacts upon the character or setting of any cultural heritage resources at Linthill provided the design of house were suitably sympathetic (a matter for any ulterior AMC application) and the conditions identified by the Landscape Section in its consultation response, were imposed upon any PPP consent issued. This would allow for an acceptable visual accommodation vis-a-vis the cultural heritage resources around the site. I would be clear though, that while such mitigation is possible with respect to the Walled Garden and Stables as cultural heritage resources, this is not the same as the proposal being capable of being acceptably accommodated within the prevailing sense of place and definition of the existing building group that these structures define and articulate. In short, in this context, acceptable mitigation in cultural heritage terms is not synonymous with acceptable accommodation in building group terms.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

While the detailed design of any proposal would need to be considered on its own merits, there is no inherent reason why a house could not be accommodated on the site acceptably; that is, without having any unacceptable impacts upon the residential amenity of any of its neighbours.

I note the concern of the owners of "River Cottage" that a new boundary might be established between their property and the site. While a property boundary should be included and appropriately defined and screened along this 'internal' boundary; there would nonetheless be a concern in the event of approval, that this internal boundary should not be so robust or extensive a feature, as to have the effect of dividing off the site so obviously from Linthill. However, the neighbours' amenity is clearly capable of being conserved with appropriate landscaping. It is though, the eastern - and not western - boundary that would require most attention in the event of approval, and the emphasis should remain there.

ROADS AND ACCESS

The Roads Planning Section is supportive of the proposed development subject to conditions being imposed to require and regulate the delivery of an upgrade to the junction of the Linthill access road to achieve specified visibility improvement works at the access from the B6359; and also to extend the private access to the site. (In connection with the junction upgrade, the Landscape Section notes some ulterior concerns with respect to the realignment of roadside hedging and accommodation of bin storage at the access road).

As Roads themselves note however, these works would involve land outwith the Applicants' control. At this point, it is not clear whether or not the Applicant would have the ability to carry out these works. As Roads anticipates though, there would in the event of approval, be potential to regulate these matters with a suspensively-worded planning condition, effectively requiring that the road access extension and upgrade works should take place ahead of the commencement of development, to ensure that these works are in fact delivered.

I would note that the position with respect to the access road extension is somewhat ambiguous in that the blue outline on the Location Plan, indicates that the land to the access road from the site is to be within the ownership - and therefore control - of the Applicant. However, this section of land is nonetheless excluded from the application site itself. Moreover, the Applicant is not currently the site owner, so it is not altogether clear at this stage if or how this land would ultimately be controlled by the Applicant. However, a suspensively worded condition would still reasonably serve to regulate this position appropriately.

I note the Applicants' own advice that the junction upgrade works are to take place in any case ("within the coming weeks"), but the timetable of such works is out with their own control and outwith the control of the Planning Authority. Without a suspensively worded condition being imposed, there would be a risk that the access improvements would not be realised, and the road would not be brought up to any appropriate standard to manage the additional traffic impacts liable to be generated by the addition of this house.

OTHER CONCERNS

In the completed planning application form, it is advised that the site would be served by private drainage arrangements (including a private septic tank and associated soakaway arrangements) and by a public water supply connection. In the event of approval, these matters are capable of being regulated by appropriately worded standard conditions of the type that are normally imposed upon PPP consents.

The concerns identified by SNH and Ecology could as they request, be addressed by appropriately worded planning conditions to help protect local biodiversity and the water environment.

I am content that there are no flood risk issues relating to this site. The Applicants report their own investigation of this matter, and I have no disagreement with their assessment.

I note advice within the Supporting Statement or planning application form to the effect that the site - as a field or paddock - is currently overgrown or unmanaged. However, the site is not reasonably characterised as derelict land, or otherwise presented as any sort of eyesore in need of any development or even greater management. The existing operation and appearance of the field does not in fact raise any planning concerns at all. In short, positive regard is not reasonably had to the Applicants' ability (facilitated by the proposal or otherwise) to manage or make any more intensive use of the field. The land is, and remains, appropriate for use as a field or paddock.

The Applicant is agreeable to the conclusion of a Section 69 Legal Agreement to collect the Waverley upgrade contribution, which would be a prerequisite to the release of any consent for this development.

Given that this is an application for Planning Permission in Principle, there would in any event, be no requirement or necessity to include the various house-layout drawings within the drawings approved or refused under this application. Moreover, the works indicated at the junction of the private road and B road, are not within the Applicant's control. Therefore these are not reasonably anything that the Applicant could, or could be held to, carry out in the current circumstances. These drawings are therefore also reasonably excluded.

On a related point, the matters that the Landscaping Section raises with respect to the proper accommodation of a bin store at the existing road junction are not relevant to the current application.

CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding that the site is adjacent to a building group that is capable of augmentation by one additional new-build dwellinghouse during the prevailing Local Development Plan Period, I consider that the extension of the building group into surrounding fields to the east, would be unacceptable in not being sympathetic to the existing and historic character of the building group. Significant considerations are:

Firstly, that Linthill is a group of buildings based at and around the walled garden and existing converted estate buildings at Linthill. The proposed site has no direct or immediate relationship or connection to these structures. It would essentially occupy an outer periphery within which it would be the only dwellinghouse;

Secondly, and contrary to the existing sense of a relatively compact group of structures being encountered sequentially at and around the perimeter of the walled garden and within the stables buildings, the

development of the site would promote a 'ribbon' character of development, switching the emphasis away from the estate's structures towards the sense of development being extended along the south bank of the Ale Water itself. This 'ribbon' would be liable to become the defining feature of the group's form and definition; and

Thirdly, the site has no existing, logical or natural eastern limit, such that the development of this land would be liable to promote a greater expansion eastwards into the remainder of the field, to exaggerate the above noted impacts further. Taken to its logical conclusion, this spread would result in an eastern annexe that might be larger than the original building group. It would have a notably different, even contradictory, character to the original group formed around the estate buildings.

For these reasons, I consider that the proposal would have an unacceptably detrimental impact upon the sense of place of the building group at Linthill and should be refused on that basis. I am content that there are no material considerations which would justify any departure from this position for the reasons set out in the report above.

REASON FOR DECISION :

The planning application should be refused for the following reason:

1) The proposed development is contrary to Adopted Local Plan Policy HD2 and the advice of Supplementary Planning Guidance - New Housing in the Borders Countryside (December 2008) in that: (i) the development is not sympathetic to the character of the building group and would not contribute positively to the sense of place of the existing building group; and (ii) the Applicant has not demonstrated that there is any operational need for a new dwellinghouse to be located at the site as a direct operational requirement of any agricultural, horticultural, forestry or other enterprise which is itself appropriate to the countryside.

Recommendation: Refused

1 The proposed development is contrary to Adopted Local Plan Policy HD2 and the advice of Supplementary Planning Guidance - New Housing in the Borders Countryside (December 2008) in that: (i) the development is not sympathetic to the character of the building group and would not contribute positively to the sense of place of the existing building group; and (ii) the Applicant has not demonstrated that there is any operational need for a new dwellinghouse to be located at the site as a direct operational requirement of any agricultural, horticultural, forestry or other enterprise which is itself appropriate to the countryside.

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

