

## APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

Low Carbon Developments Ltd was established in 2013 by David Anderson, retired architect and town planner.

We aim to improve the quality of housing and create special places across the Scottish Borders through good design.

Our first project, Paddock House in Galashiels, built on a narrow urban site, dovetailed with its landscape setting. We adapted Passivhaus ideas to the warmer, moist Borders climate, boosting winter daylight with ribbon rooflights.

This was the first AA rated house (the highest level of energy and environmental performance) to go on the open market in the Borders.



In 2014 we designed and built a four-storey townhouse beside Mary Queen of Scots House in Jedburgh. Following the unexpected discovery of 12<sup>th</sup> century archaeological remains, we found a way to preserve these in situ by turning the building frontage through 90 degrees.

The design challenged planning orthodoxy, enhanced neighbouring amenity and created a spectacular home and new much-loved landmark in a conservation area. The project was featured in The Times.



In 2018, we completed Nisbetmill Garden, a group of four rural homes beside Monteviot House, designed for country living and working. The entire development sold out within a month, even before the Open Day.

All houses have exceptional levels of insulation and airtightness, air sourced heat pumps, photovoltaics and whole house heat recovery ventilation.

In addition to providing a safe new road access for the neighbouring mill cottages, we landscaped the whole site with trees, hedging and shrubs.



We currently have a planning application for the regeneration of the former Burns Mill engineering works in Galashiels with 19 new flats and ground floor arcaded live/work studio units. Uniquely the flats will have 100% accessibility, a district heating system, indoor fitness pool and roof garden for residents' use.

We aim to deliver at least fifty new low carbon homes in the Scottish Borders by 2025. Each project is carefully researched and meticulously detailed to ensure homes that provide comfort, reduce bills and CO2 emissions.



## Four Houses at Thornwood Reach



Thornwood gave us the opportunity for local people to have a contemporary well-designed eco-house with a riverside setting. These are not just a thing of dreams or Grand Designs.

There is precious little new housing available in Hawick, and it is a privilege to have the chance to do this. We have established good relationships with local tradesmen and builders. We have the in-house skills, experience and the confidence to set new standards for Borders housing.

Our house designs at Thornwood respond to the urban context of the site – both its street surroundings, and the open aspect of river and parkland beyond. We decided to retain and reinforce the hedgerow frontage, and save all the trees within the site, moving them if necessary.

The entire site is sloping ground, and by creating the landscaped parking courts, we were able to take the soil from levelling the house platforms and use it all as fill, making the need to remove it from site unnecessary. Doing this we avoided all underbuilding.

By deploying timber crib retaining walls, it became possible to have a two-storey street frontage with private sunny south facing patio areas, invisible from the street.

We opted to use larch, as we did successfully at Paddock House, because it has an A+ Green rating and weathers to a warm silvery colour, compatible with the local stone.

Because the planning officer did not engage with us and did not visit the site, he has never understood what we have designed. That is why his report is muddled, full of errors and contradictions.

The officer's own notions about re-siting the houses beside the busy road, which he was determined to impose on us, are unhealthy and completely and demonstrably unworkable.

There is nothing contrived or exaggerated about this proposal.

Where the planning officer sees just a flat roof, we see rows of solar panels that match the pitch of the roofs next door, and between them moss and fern gardens whose carbon capture is equivalent to hundreds of trees.

We have a proven track record of delivering homes whose performance excels, and high quality, contextual site-specific design. Our designs are imbued with human spirit and optimism for the future. They enhance the health and well-being of residents and communities.

At Thornwood we look to the future rather than be pastiche in our designs. We believe this proposal will sit well within the streetscape and will have no significant impact on local amenity.

There have been limited objections to our proposal, and we consider that most in the community welcome high-quality houses built on this land.

We build sustainable housing using precious resources for a very different world in future. Since the application was lodged, the UK Government has declared a Climate Change Emergency. The UN has just issued its IPBES report issued on the frightening scale of global biodiversity loss.

We take for granted constant innovation in our cars, appliances and mobile phones. The world today is a hotbed of research and development. Yet when we showed Borders planners what is possible, our proposal was not properly considered.

We have a great vision for the future. Projects like this take a huge amount of time and effort to put together. Refusal puts at risk a private investment of £750,000. This is a beacon project, a fantastic opportunity for regenerating Hawick, providing much needed local jobs and housing of the highest standard, and it could all be lost.