

Mr Herkes' Appraisal	Comment	Facts	Scottish Borders Council Design Guidance
1 the layout and design are very unsympathetic to established character of the site and surrounding streetscape	False.	The site is a distinct green space separated from Weensland Road by a long-established unbroken hedgerow. The site was the kitchen garden to Thornwood House, now the Mansfield House Hotel. Its entire historical association is with the Thornwood estate and not with Weensland Mills, of which the terrace is a part. The surrounding urban character is varied with housing from the 1870s, 1930s and 1970s, each with a very different character, layout and design. The site has remained a garden to this day, with grass and tree planting. The established character of the site is a garden/parkland setting.	the proposed relationship of the building to its wider setting has been considered, particularly in the visual amenity of the townscape or landscape setting (p56) Layouts should be designed with open space as integral to the overall arrangement (p48) variety... of buildings adds richness and character (p36) walls, fences and hedges are almost as important as the buildings in defining the streetscene (p42) boundaries... help shape the overall quality and character of spaces within the street, almost as much as the buildings (p38) planting can greatly enhance the local character and visual, ecological and recreational quality of a place. Trees form an important visual backdrop... can frame development and anchor it within the landscape (p33)
2 in a more secluded, discrete site, this design and layout could have been accommodated acceptably	False.	The site is distinct from its neighbours. The existing boundary hedgerow will be raised and consolidated. New trees will be planted along the road frontage to enhance the seclusion and privacy, reduce traffic impacts, and green the urban space. This is a secluded site and it accommodates the proposed houses.	The use of trees within the public realm can greatly enhance the quality... and visual amenity of a neighbourhood (p50)
3 what is proposed would be liable to appear boxy and bulky and be significantly out-of-keeping with the surrounding area	False.	Visuals prepared show this not to be the case. The houses are no higher than any surrounding buildings. The proposed setback from the road and the landscape setting will make the houses appear less, not more bulky.	
4 the site is clearly visible from the public realm	False.	Thornwood Lodge and the application site are contained behind stone walls and mature hedges	

1

	the amenity of the neighbouring houses to the south		exaggerated. It follows the neighbourhood pattern. The remnant of Weensland Terrace is the one exception to this pattern. Neighbouring amenity has been evaluated in accordance with BRE Digest 209. There is absolutely no loss of sunlight, overshadowing or overlooking of any neighbouring properties. There is no capacity for parking with the planner's gable to gable suggested layout. The Weensland terrace frontage is just 3 metres from the pavement. Side-on parking would require removal of the entire existing boundary hedge and all future planting the detriment of the public realm. The space is so tight car doors would brush against the walls of the new houses. The overall effect on the quality of the streetscape would be extremely negative.	arranged... with a staggered building line (p36)
8	there would be some capacity to accommodate off-street parking to the front (with gable-to-gable frontage)	False		
9	more extensive ground works than would be required were the houses to be (aligned with the terrace)	False	The building is carefully designed and sited to eliminate all underbuilding. The amount of cut matches exactly the amount of fill, consequently there is <u>zero</u> waste. To align the new houses with the terrace (the planner's preferred arrangement) would result in basements with no natural light and subject future residents to a poor quality of life. Increasing the proximity to the busy road from 9 to 3 metres would significantly damage the health and well-being of future residents through increased exposure to diesel particulates and noise pollution, especially as the proposed tree planting would be completely eliminated.	topography presents... an opportunity for innovative building design. The... development platform should be in harmony with the site as much as is practicable relative to the landform, avoiding excessive under-building... and excessive cutting and filling (p55)

3