

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

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

PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)

REF : 20/00486/FUL
APPLICANT : Mr and Ms Neil / Valerie Fortune / Mauchlen
AGENT : Dan-Wood Concept Plus Ltd
DEVELOPMENT : Erection of dwellinghouse with detached garage
LOCATION: Land North West Of Strathmyre Old Belses
Jedburgh
Scottish Borders

TYPE : FUL Application

REASON FOR DELAY:

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Plan Ref	Plan Type	Plan Status
SP01	Location Plan	Refused
PP01	Proposed Site Plan	Refused
	Proposed Plans & Elevations	Refused

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 1

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

One letter was received from a neighbouring property neither objecting nor supporting the application.

Consultations

Ancrum Community Council: Have not responded at the time of writing this report.

Education and Lifelong learning: Have not responded at the time of writing this report.

Roads Planning Officer: Objects to the application in that the proposal does not comply with Policy PMD2 of the Local Development Plan 2016 in that it would fail to ensure there is no adverse impact on road safety, including but not limited to the site access.

Scottish Water: Have not responded at the time of writing this report.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:

Local Development Plan 2016

PMD2 - Quality Standards

HD2 - Housing in the Countryside

HD3- Protection of Residential Amenity

EP1: International Nature Conservation and Protected Species

EP2: National Nature Conservation Sites and Protected Species

EP3 - Local Biodiversity
EP13 - Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
IS2 - Developer Contributions
IS7 - Parking Provision and Standards
IS9 - Waste Water and Treatment Standards and Sustainable Urban Drainage

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Developer Contributions 2019
Householder Development (Privacy and Sunlight) 2006
Landscape and Development 2008
New Housing in the Borders Countryside 2008
Placemaking and Design 2010
Trees and Development 2008
Waste Management 2015

Scottish Planning Policy 2014

Recommendation by - Brett Taylor (Planning Officer) on 30th July 2020

Site and Proposal

The application site is a relatively level undeveloped field located to the northwest of Old Belses Cottage and opposite the property at Braeside. The village of Ancrum is approximately 6km to the east. The current boundary treatments consist of hedging and post and wire fencing. The site would be served by an existing road the B 6400 which forms the north-eastern boundary of the site. The submitted location plan shows an entrance located on the north-eastern corner of the site.

The applicant is seeking planning permission for a single storey house with a footprint of approximately 171m² and a separate garage of approximately 49m². Access would be taken half-way along the north-eastern boundary of the site opposite the existing access to the property at Braeside. The site would have a private access track with an area of hardstanding including vehicle parking and stand-alone garage.

The proposed house would have a pitched roof and be 'L' shaped, it would measure 16.1m x 14.3m at its widest points and will be 5m in height. Four windows and a door are proposed for the southeast elevation, three windows for the northeast elevation, two windows and a door for the northwest elevation. The southwest elevation would have three windows and two gable windows. The materials would comprise of white rendered walls, grey concrete roof tiles, UPVC windows/doors and rainwater goods. The soffits and fascias would be white painted timber.

The separate garage would be situated to the east of the main house and would have a similar design pitched roof. It would measure 8.3m x 6.2m and would be 4.4m in height. The materials would be the same as the main dwellinghouse.

Other proposals shown on the submitted plans include the installation of a septic tank for foul water and a new soakaway for surface water.

Site History

There is no planning history associated with this site. No pre-application discussions were undertaken.

Key Planning Policies

The key policies against which this application is assessed are PMD2 - quality standards and HD2 - housing in the countryside.

In terms of policy HD2: The council aims to encourage a sustainable pattern of development focused on defined settlements. That aim does not preclude the development of housing in the countryside. Where rural housing is permitted by policy HD2, the aim is to locate development in appropriate locations. There

are three general principles which are the starting point for the consideration of new houses in the countryside. Those are:

- 1) Locations within villages are preferred to open countryside, where permission will be granted in only special circumstances on appropriate sites;
- 2) Sites associated with existing building groups and which will not be detrimental to the character of the group or surrounding area, and;
- 3) In dispersed communities in the Southern Borders housing market area.

The New Housing in the Borders Countryside supplementary planning guidance (SPG) reinforces the terms of policy HD2, albeit the SPG predates the introduction of the 30% threshold in the policy.

Of the above, the application falls into the second criterion. Although the site is not within a defined settlement, it is associated with a building group of three houses (Braeside, Old Belses and Strathmyre) which has not been expanded during the local development plan period.

Our SPG cautions against developing beyond established building group boundaries into undeveloped fields - to do so opens up the potential of expanding the group away from the sense of place which justifies a house in the first place. In this case, the proposed site is an exposed undeveloped field and the development would expand the group in an uninterrupted manner along the B 6400. As such, this proposal would encourage ribbon development along this section of the B 6400, out of character with the clustered form of the group. This does not comply with Policy HD2 or our SPG as a result, since it will not sympathetically relate to its character or sense of place. Siting a house here would not comprise a sympathetic, organic addition to the area.

Placemaking and design

Policy PMD2 sets out the council's strategy towards design. It states, amongst other things, that: "All new development will be expected to be of high quality in accordance with sustainability principles, designed to fit with...its landscape surroundings". The policy sets out the standards which will apply to all development."

For this application, I consider the design of the proposal would fail to make a positive contribution to the sense of place. The design of both the house and garage are of a suburban character, and whilst I acknowledge the property opposite the proposal (Braeside) is of similar character, this site is more exposed and prominent. The design is of insufficient quality by incorporating a low shallow pitched roof, horizontal form and fenestration. The external materials require amendment, and no details have been provided on landscaping and boundary treatment. These latter matters can be addressed by condition, but the overall form and design of the house requires significant change to relate sympathetically to the group and reflect policy aspirations for good quality design.

Overall, in my interpretation, the resulting house and garage would not be sympathetic to the adjacent group or setting and would therefore be contrary to the terms of policies HD2 and PMD2 and related guidance.

Amenity and privacy

Notwithstanding above fundamental matters regarding the principle of development, the site appears to be capable of accommodating a modest house. That would, however, need to be balanced by the impact on the visual amenity of the rural location resulting from eventual design of the development. The submitted design is of little architectural merit and would be an incongruous feature in the countryside. That having been said, the house and garage are sufficiently distance from the neighbouring properties that amenity and privacy would not be adversely affected.

Developer contribution

No developer contributions would be required in respect of education provision and affordable housing.

Ecology

With respect to ecology, given the site is not subject to any natural heritage designations nor nearby any, no buildings would be lost, mature trees removed, or substantial amounts of hedging needing removed, it is,

therefore, considered that the proposal will have a negligible impact on ecology and biodiversity of the surrounding area.

Parking and Road Safety

Policy PMD2 requires that a development incorporates adequate access and turning space and for vehicles and ensures that there is no adverse impact on road safety. Policy IS7 requires that car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

The site is capable of providing two spaces to support a new house, thus complying with Policies IS7. The site is proposed to be accessed via a new entrance onto the B 6400. The Council's Road Planning Officer has considered the suitability of the proposed access and objects to the proposal due to road safety concerns. The principle of new accesses on to B class roads is not supported without economic or road safety justification. Whilst a site visit was not possible due to Covid-19 restrictions, it has been advised by the Roads Planning Officer that the primary function of B Class roads out with settlement boundaries is movement of vehicles which could potentially travel up to 60mph. To facilitate safe vehicle movements, the Council would seek to limit the number of new accesses onto B class roads unless a proposed development provides a sufficient economic or road safety benefit. In addition, Roads Planning Officer's opinion is that the proposed access is not an appropriate location due to the nature of the road and the lack of a strong building group. These concerns are not capable of being addressed by planning condition.

Overall, this new access would be an isolated access onto a rural section of road without any justification and as such would be contrary to policy PMD2.

Services

The applicant states that the site will be connected to the public water supply. Foul drainage would be by means of a private system including the installation of a septic tank and soakaway.

Trees

There are no trees currently on the site. The plan is not sufficiently detailed and, if permission were to be granted, a fully detailed landscaping plan would be required by condition.

Waste

The submitted site plan indicates provision for the storage of bins next to the garage away from public view.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the application is refused for the reasons given above.

REASON FOR DECISION :

The development would be contrary to Policies PMD2 and HD2 of the Local Development Plan 2016 and New Housing in the Borders Countryside Guidance 2008 because it would constitute housing in the countryside that would not be well related to a building group by extending out into an open field alongside the B 6400. It would also be of a design that would not be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, contrary to the above-noted policies and our SPG on Placemaking and Design. Furthermore, the proposed means of access would be unsatisfactory since the development would potentially increase the road safety risk along the B 6400.

Recommendation: Refused

- 1 The development would be contrary to Policy HD2 of the Local Development Plan 2016 and New Housing in the Borders Countryside Guidance 2008 in that the development would not relate

sympathetically to an existing building group and would lead to an unjustified and sporadic expansion of development into a previously undeveloped field. The proposal would therefore not relate sympathetically to the character and sense of place of an existing building group and there is no overriding economic or other justification to support the development.

- 2 The development is contrary to policy PMD2 of the Local Development Plan 2016 in that the means of access onto a B Class Road out with a settlement boundary would unacceptably adversely affect the road safety of the B 6400
- 3 The development is contrary to policies PMD2 and HD2 of the Local Development Plan 2016 and the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Placemaking and Design 2010 and New Housing in the Borders Countryside 2008 in that its form and design would not be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the building group or countryside setting.

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