



PLANNING STATEMENT

BLACK BARN, ECKFORD, KELSO, TD5 8LF

**DETAILED PLANNING APPLICATION FOR
CONVERSION OF EXISTING BARN TO A RESIDENTIAL
DWELLING WITH ASSOCIATED AMENITY, PARKING,
INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS**

APPLICANT: BUCCLEUCH ESTATES LTD

APRIL 2021

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Appendix 1: Site Location Plan

Author	Date
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Approved	Date

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Buccleuch Estates a full planning application for the conversion of the existing agricultural shed into a single residential dwelling located at Black Barn, Eckford, Kelso. A site / location plan can be found within **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The proposal will provide much needed residential accommodation within the Scottish Borders and represents the most suitable and sustainable form of development utilising the existing built form within a rural village setting whilst being within close proximity to Kelso, enabling the proposal to contribute to the vitality and viability of Kelso's local services and facilities.
- 1.3 This statement has been prepared to consider the site context and relevant planning policy, before explaining the compliance with the development plan and related material planning considerations.

Submission Documents

- 1.4 The following documents and drawings (Table 1.1 and Table 1.2) have been prepared by the consultant team and are submitted in support of this planning application. Notably, the submission documents are in accordance with the Scottish Borders Council (SBC) Validation Requirements for planning applications of this nature.

Table 1.1 Planning Application Submission Documents

Document	Consultant
Planning Application Fee	The Applicant
Application Form, Ownership Certificates	Ferguson Planning Ltd
Planning Statement	Ferguson Planning Ltd
Habitat Survey	Ellendale Environmental
Structural Conditions Survey	Goodsons Associates
Design Statement	CSY Architects

Table 1.2 Drawings

Document	Consultant
Ground Floor Plan- As Existing	CSY Architects
Elevations N&S- As Existing	CSY Architects
Elevations E&W- As Existing	CSY Architects
Sections- As Existing	CSY Architects
Site Plan- As Existing	CSY Architects
Site Location Plan- As Proposed	CSY Architects
Ground Floor Plan- As Proposed	CSY Architects
First Floor Plan- As Proposed	CSY Architects
Roof Plan- As Proposed	CSY Architects
Sections- As Proposed	CSY Architects

Elevations North and South- As Proposed	CSY Architects
Elevations East and West- As Proposed	CSY Architects
3D Views	CSY Architects

Structure of Planning Statement

1.5 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to provide SBC with details of the existing site and surroundings; the relevant planning history of the site; details of the proposed development and reasoned justification in the context of the local area and relevant planning policies. This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 - Site Context and Planning History;
- Section 3 - Proposed Development;
- Section 4 - Planning Policy;
- Section 5- Planning Consideration; and
- Sections 6 - Summary and Conclusions.

2. Site Context and Planning History

- 2.1 This Full Planning Application relates to the conversion of the existing agricultural barn into a single residential dwelling at Black Barn, Eckford, Kelso.
- 2.2 The site is 0.35ha in size and occupies a one and a half storey agricultural barn which is currently vacant as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 below:

Figure 1: Image of Black Barn.



Figure 2: Image of the interior of the barn



- 2.3 The barn dates back to the 1950s and was originally part of a small holding which incorporated Eckford Village Cottage. The barn was used for general agricultural purposes, before being used

as a grain store in more recent years. From 2009-2011 the barn was let as a general storage unit before it ceased operation and became vacant.

- 2.4 The building is formed of a timber frame structure of perimeter posts along the northern and southern elevations with a central line of posts following the ridge line of the roof connected by a series of complex braces timber trusses and tied by lateral beams and roof purlins. Beneath this timber structure, towards the western and northern site of the building lie a collection of masonry walls of stonework and concrete block, remnants from different eras of the buildings prior to occupancy.
- 2.5 Externally the barn structure has historically been cladded, in a mixture of dark coloured profiled sheet to the roof and walls combined with rendered masonry walls to part height on the West elevation and South elevation. There are a range of timber shutters, doors and windows distributed around the various elevations of the building.
- 2.6 All of the external materials are now showing their age visually through the effects of weathering but the structure beneath, while in need of some localised repairs, is considered sound.
- 2.7 The site can be accessed from the west from the existing access track which is within the applicant's ownership. Adjoining the site to the south is an existing residential property one storey in height which also uses the access track. Immediately adjoining the site to the west and north is pastureland laid to grass with residential dwellings forming part of Eckford Village beyond. To the east is agricultural land.
- 2.8 In terms of topography, the site itself is relatively flat, with the topography falling beyond the site boundary to the east.
- 2.9 With regards to the Local Development Plan adopted proposals map, the site holds no specific allocations or designations.
- 2.10 The proposed dwelling utilises this vacant site enhancing the existing built form making it more aesthetically pleasing which if left would continue to fall into a dilapidated state. The intention of the proposal is to retrain the building profile with the proposed dwelling sheltered beneath the structure of the existing barn illustrated within Section 3 of this report.
- 2.11 In terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 6.5 miles south of Kelso (35 minutes cycle or 12 minutes' drive) offering a range of services and facilities, along with onward public transport with the local bus stops to Melrose, Galashiels and Tweedbank for rail services to Edinburgh City Centre.
- 2.12 In terms of Heritage, there are no listed buildings on or within close proximity to the Site.
- 2.13 The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) are the statutory body for flood management in Scotland and maintain flood risk maps for public and development purposes. The site does not fall in an area at risk of flooding which is identified in figure 3 below.

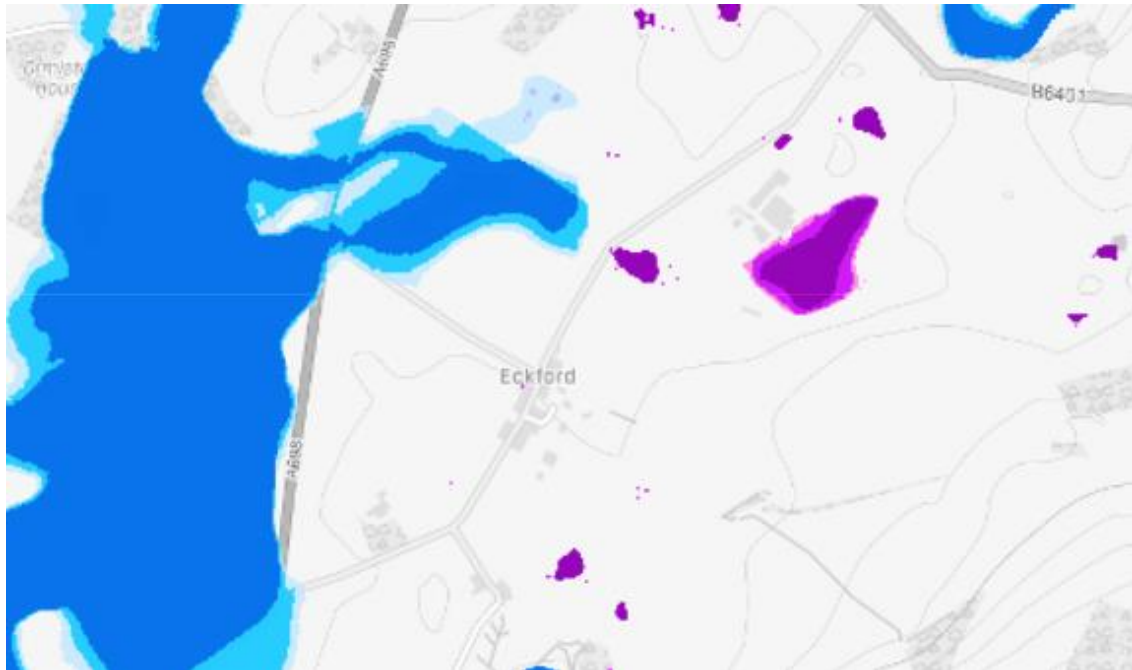


Figure 3: Extract from The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) highlighting the areas at risk of flooding in blue.

Planning History

- 2.14 Referring to the Scottish Borders planning application search, there have been no historic planning applications to date on the site or in the neighbouring area.

3. The Development

3.1 This section sets out details of the proposed development. The description of which is as follows:

“Full Planning Application for the conversion of the existing Agricultural Barn for a single Residential Dwelling with associated Amenity, Parking, Infrastructure and Access at Black Barn, Eckford, Kelso”.

3.2 The proposed development involves the conversion of the existing vacant agricultural shed to provide a substantial single family sized residential dwelling with associated infrastructure at Black Barn, Eckford, Kelso, identified on the site location plan in Appendix 1 and proposed layout plan in Figure 4 below:

Figure 4: Proposed Layout Plan



3.3 The proposal adheres to the general principle contained within the new Permitted Development Rights ((General Permitted Development and Use Classes) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020 which came into force on the 1st April 2021) by due to the size being over 150 sqm in scale has triggered the requirement for a full planning application to be made.

3.4 The proposal seeks to convert the existing Black Barn into residential use, maintaining the overall footprint and sheltering silhouette of the building in its context whilst utilising the space for residential purposes, maintaining the character of the agricultural structure.

3.5 Careful consideration has been taken in the internal layout of the barn, optimising the natural light through a glazed central courtyard and surrounding roof glazing, whilst incorporating the

character of the barn with retaining the existing timber structure which will carry a new, highly insulated roof. The internal layout has been configured to create a range of open plan spaces running full width from West to East across the plan, optimising the landscaping views to the east.

- 3.6 The voluminous spaces will contrast with a sequence of more private rooms, bathrooms and service spaces to the north and south of the barn which are screened by boundary landscaping giving visual protection to and from the neighbouring properties.
- 3.7 There will be one vehicular access point to the west of the site from the existing access lane onto the main road running through Eckford Village towards the A698 leading to Kelso and Bonjedward.
- 3.8 In terms of the chosen materiality, the proposed dark coloured metal wall and roof cladding is considered to maintain the simple profile, colour and texture of the existing Black Barn with its original agricultural purpose when views from a distance within its context.
- 3.9 The proposed Scotch Larch timber cladding, slats and glazing screens and doors provide a softer, more tactile, perimeter 'skirt' which becomes more evident upon approach creating the appearance of the domestic transformation into residential accommodation as illustrated in figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Contextual Image of the Proposed Views from the South West



- 3.10 The private outdoor amenity provision for the proposed dwelling would be substantial, complimenting the natural rural environment in which it surrounds. The site benefits from being bordered by existing trees and vegetation which will be retained where possible.

3.11 Further information can be found in the accompanying design statement prepared by CSY Architecture submitted in support of this application.

4. Planning Policy

4.1 This section outlines the principle planning policy considerations which have informed the emerging development proposals and which provide the context for the consideration of the proposed scheme.

Scottish planning Policy (SPP) 2020

4.2 SPP creates a presumption in favour of sustainable development and establishes that the planning system should support economically, environmentally and socially sustainable places by enabling development that balances the costs and benefits of a proposal over the longer term. The aim is to achieve the right development in the right place; it is not to allow development at any cost. Specifically, policies and decisions should be guided by key principles, including:

- giving due weight to net economic benefit;
- responding to economic issues, challenges and opportunities, as outlined in local economic strategies;
- supporting good design and the six qualities of successful places;
- making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure including supporting town centre and regeneration priorities;
- supporting delivery of accessible housing, business, retailing and leisure development;
- supporting delivery of infrastructure, for example transport, education, energy, digital and water;
- supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation including taking account of flood risk;
- improving health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation;
- having regard to the principles for sustainable land use set out in the Land Use Strategy;
- protecting, enhancing and promoting access to cultural heritage, including the historic environment;
- protecting, enhancing and promoting access to natural heritage, including green infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment;
- reducing waste, facilitating its management and promoting resource recovery; and
- avoiding over-development, protecting the amenity of new and existing development and considering the implications of development for water, air and soil quality.

4.3 SPP sets out a vision for vibrant rural, coastal and island areas, with growing, sustainable communities supported by new opportunities for employment and education. The character of rural and island areas and the challenges they face vary greatly across the country, from

pressurised areas of countryside around towns and cities to more remote and sparsely populated areas.

4.4 In rural areas the Government intends the planning system to:

- promote a pattern of development that is appropriate to the character of the particular rural area and the challenges it faces; and
- supports prosperous and sustainable communities and businesses whilst protecting and enhancing environmental quality.

The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (2016)

4.5 The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 12th May 2016 and sets out the policies on development and land use within the Scottish Borders.

4.6 The emerging Local Development Plan 2 for the Scottish Borders is at an advanced stage and was presented to the full council on 25th September 2020. The formal consultation period ran between 2nd November 2020 and 25th January 2021. As the plan is nearing adoption, it should be considered a material consideration.

4.7 With reference to the adopted Scottish Borders Proposals Map (2016), the site is classed as 'White Land' with no allocations or designations and falls just outside the settlement boundary of Eckford. An extract of the proposals map can be found below:



Figure 4: Extract of Scottish Borders Proposals Map

4.8 The key policies under which the development will be assessed include:

- LDP Policy PMD1: Sustainability
- LDP Policy PMD2: Quality Standards
- LDP Policy HD2: Housing in the Countryside
- LDP Policy HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity
- LDP Policy HD 4: Meeting the Housing Land Requirement / Further Housing Land Safeguarding

4.9 **Policy PMD1: Sustainability:** The preparation of the Local Development Plan was heavily informed by the acknowledged “*need for action on climate change*” and the Council’s Environmental Strategy, which sit behind the ‘support and encouragement of sustainable development’ across the Borders. Policy PMD1 sets out the “*sustainability principles which underpin all the Plan’s policies*” and that the Council expects to inform development proposals and planning decisions:

- a) the long-term sustainable use and management of land
- b) the preservation of air and water quality
- c) the protection of natural resources, landscapes, habitats, and species
- d) the protection of built and cultural resources
- e) the efficient use of energy and resources, particularly non-renewable resources
- f) the minimisation of waste, including waste water and encouragement to its sustainable management
- g) the encouragement of walking, cycling, and public transport in preference to the private car
- h) the minimisation of light pollution
- i) the protection public health and safety
- j) the support of community services and facilities
- k) the provision of new jobs and support to the local economy
- l) the involvement of the local community in the design, management, and improvement of their environment.

4.10 **Policy PMD2: Quality Standards:** The Policy sets out a range of sustainability, placemaking and design, accessibility and open space/ biodiversity requirements, whereby the proposal must:

- Take appropriate measures to maximise the efficient use of energy and resources, in terms of layout, orientation, construction and energy supply;
- Make provision for sustainable drainage;
- Incorporate appropriate measures for separate storage of waste and recycling;
- Incorporate appropriate landscaping to help integration with the surroundings;
- Create a sense of place, based on a clear understanding of context;
- Be of a scale, massing and height appropriate to the surroundings;
- Be finished externally in materials, the colours and textures of which complement the highest quality of architecture in the locality;
- Be compatible with, and respect, the character of the surrounding area, neighbouring uses and neighbouring built form;
- Be able to be satisfactorily accommodated within the site;
- Provide for appropriate boundary treatments to ensure attractive edges, and to help integration with the surroundings;
- Incorporate access for those with mobility difficulties;

- Not have an adverse impact on road safety in terms of the site access;
- Incorporate adequate access and turning space for vehicles including those used for waste collection purposes.
- Retain physical or natural features which are important to the amenity or biodiversity of the area.

4.11 **Policy HD2: Housing in the Countryside:** Policy HD2 addresses development proposals for housing related to existing Building Groups or in rural areas in general. The relevant text to this quotation has been copied below:

“(C) Conversion of Buildings to a House

Development that is a change of use of a building to a house may be acceptable provided that:

- a) The Council is satisfied that the building has architectural or historic merit, is capable of conversion and is physically suited for residential use,
- b) The building stands substantially intact (normally at least to wallhead height) and the existing structure requires no significant demolition. A structural survey will be required where in the opinion of the Council it appears that the building may not be capable of conversion, and
- c) The conversion and any proposed extension or alteration is in keeping with the scale and architectural character of the existing building.

4.12 **Policy HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity:** The Policy states that “development that is judged to have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing or proposed residential areas will not be permitted. To protect the amenity and character of these areas, any developments will be assessed against:

- a) the principle of the development, including where relevant, any open space that would be lost; and
- b) the details of the development itself particularly in terms of:
 - i. the scale, form, and type of development in terms of its fit within a residential area,
 - ii. the impact of the proposed development on the existing and surrounding properties particularly in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy and sunlight provisions. These considerations apply especially in relation to garden ground or ‘backland’ development,
 - iii. the generation of traffic or noise,
 - iv. the level of visual impact.”

4.13 **LDP Policy HD 4: Meeting the Housing Land Requirement / Further Housing Land Safeguarding:** This policy is intended to assist the Council to maintain the 5 year effective housing land supply at all times, whilst safeguarding particular sensitive areas from development.

Material Considerations

New Housing in the Borders Countryside Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

- 4.13 The Supplementary Planning Guidance provides “advice and assistance with the siting and design of new housing in the Borders countryside”. Pertinent sections of the Guidance have been identified below.
- 4.14 The Guidance accepts that “the Borders area is not uniform in its landscape character” and that for “new housing to be absorbed successfully into a particular landscape it is important that the setting is selected by respecting the local landform, the field patterns and the tree and hedgerow cover”.
- 4.15 The Guidance continues to establish that the development of “new housing in harmony with its immediate and wider surroundings” is possible by “respecting the local landform, the pattern of fields and the distribution of tree and hedgerow cover”.
- 4.16 The Guidance sets out that the existence of a Building Group “will be identifiable by a sense of place which will be contributed to by:
- natural boundaries such as water courses, trees or enclosing landform, or
 - man-made boundaries such as existing buildings, roads, plantations or means of enclosure.”
- 4.17 The Council’s expectations for elements of the proposed design which relate to access are also included in the Guidance, “in the interests of public safety it is therefore important that any new houses in the countryside are served by a vehicular access of a safe standard and provided with adequate on-site facilities for vehicle movement and parking.”
- 4.18 Conversion or Rebuilding aims to support the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside outwith defined settlements. Rehabilitation of any available existing buildings should be considered as an alternative to new development and the Scottish Borders Council will look sympathetically at proposals for the sensitive reuse, conversion or rehabilitation of traditional buildings.
- 4.19 In assessing proposals for the conversion of agricultural and other nonresidential buildings to residential use, and in addition to policy D2 in the Local Plan, the following criteria will be applied:
- No adverse effect on the viability of a farming unit or conflict with the operations of a working farm;
 - Satisfactory access and other road requirements;
 - Satisfactory public or private water supply and drainage facilities;
 - The building is structurally sound, in a reasonable state of repair, and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding.

- Structural Survey will be required where it appears that a building may not be capable of conversion. If it is incapable of conversion, any replacement building should reflect the form and character of the original structure. Significant alterations will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that these provide environmental benefits such as a more sustainable and energy efficient design;
- 5. The building can be converted without alterations to its external appearance which would detract from its character and attractiveness;
- 6. The building makes a positive contribution to the landscape and has no adverse effect on countryside amenity or nature conservation;
- 7. No adverse impact on ancient monuments or archaeological sites;
- 8. Appropriate siting, design and materials in accordance with the relevant Local Plan policies.

Permitted Development Rights (General Permitted Development and Use Classes) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020)

- 4.20 The new permitted development rights which came into force on the 1st April 2021 permits the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and commercial use for units that do not exceed 150sqm in size. As the Black Barn is larger than 150sqm, the proposed conversion would not fall under permitted development however it is evident the principle of agricultural to residential conversions is acceptable.

5. Development Considerations

- 5.1 This section of the statement sets out the key planning considerations arising from the proposal setting out a reasoned justification for the development in the context of the adopted planning policy and the specifics of the site and its surroundings.

Principle of Development

- 5.2 The site in question occupies a vacant agricultural shed adjoining the settlement boundary of Eckford. The proposals seek to utilise this redundant site through the conversion of the existing built form into a residential dwelling which would be in keeping with the neighbouring residential properties. The conversion of the vacant shed in a sustainable location which will enhance the aesthetics of this site and enable the barn to not fall into a state of disrepair in accordance with policies PMD1 and PMD2.
- 5.3 It is considered the plot is situated within an infill and sustainable location, sitting adjacent to the existing residential dwellings to the north, south and west, relating well to the neighbouring built form at Eckford Village. The type and form of development proposed is considered to be acceptable on the site.
- 5.4 The recent changes to the Permitted Development Rights (General Permitted Development and Use Classes) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020 which came into force on the 1st April 2021 permits the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and commercial use for units that do not exceed 150sqm in size. As the Black Barn is larger than 150sqm, the proposed conversion would not fall under permitted development. However, it is evident the principle of agricultural to residential conversions is acceptable and supported by the Scottish Government.
- 5.5 The principle of development is considered to be acceptable as the proposal comprises the conversion of a structurally sound agricultural barn to form residential accommodation as illustrated in the Structural Conditions Survey accompanying this report, adjoining the settlement boundary of Eckford in accordance with Section (C) of Policy HD2. The proposal will also contribute to the Scottish Borders Housing Land Supply supported by policy HD4 or the LDP.

Residential Amenity

- 5.6 The proposal has been prepared to provide a good level of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed dwelling whilst safeguarding the amenity of residents within the existing neighbouring properties. The orientation of the windows and existing adequate septation distances between the neighbouring dwellings ensures there is no direct overlooking, maintaining the privacy of occupant.
- 5.7 As the footprint and silhouette of the barn remains unchanged, there will be no adverse impacts on overshadowing and daylight/ sunlight provision, further safeguarding the amenity of future occupiers and neighbouring residents.
- 5.8 It is considered the scale of the proposed dwelling through the conversion of the barn is appropriate to the site and the local area, despite being substantial in size. The proposal offers a

generous open plan living area with views out onto the open landscape to the east. A home office is proposed creating a live/ workspace arrangement which has become increasingly necessary with the recent Covid-19 restrictions and the sudden requirement of homeworking which is likely to become the new normal. The home office has been carefully positioned to enable visitors to be directed to the workspace area without entering the core living space, creating an attractive separation from work/ life living.

- 5.9 It is deemed the views of the built form from public receptor points from the main road to the west and the neighbouring properties will be enhanced with the aesthetics of the vacant building improving through bringing life back into the site. The existing hedgerow to the south will be maintained and enhanced where possible, creating a natural screening from the adjoining residential property. Overall, the visual impact of the proposal on the local area is considered to be improved, making it more aesthetically pleasing.
- 5.10 As the proposal provides for good amenity on-site and safeguards the amenity of the surrounding area, it is considered to be in accordance with Policy HD3.

Design and Materiality

- 5.11 In accordance with policy PMD2 'Quality Standards' the proposed conversion of the agricultural barn seeks to maintain the distinct character of its former use whilst utilising the generous amount of internal space to create a modern, open plan living arrangement. The retention of the existing timber structure will carry a new 'overcoat' which will be highly insulated supported by Policy PMD1.
- 5.12 A glazed central courtyard and surrounding roof glazing bring plentiful natural light, solar gains, ventilation and privacy into the centre of the plan and highlight the dramatic existing timber structure.
- 5.13 The boundary landscaping bordering the site further ensures the proposal does not impinge upon the local character of the area whilst protecting the privacy of future occupants and neighbouring residents, sitting well within the setting of the rural village whilst reducing the visual impact of the proposed inhabitable use.
- 5.14 Further information can be found in the supporting Design Statement and Plans submitted as part of this planning application prepared by CSY Architected and the Structural Conditions Survey prepared by Goodsons Associates have undertaken.

Sustainability

- 5.15 The proposal intends to support a sustainable form of development through renewables such as solar panels, air source heat pumps and electrical charging points and will accord with Policy PMD1 in that regard.

Ecology

- 5.16 Ellendale Environmental were instructed by the Applicant to conduct an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey on- site. The Survey found no evidence of protected species on-site.
- 5.17 Further details of the Survey can be found in the supporting statement forming part of the submission package in accordance with Policy EP3 Local Biodiversity.

Access and Parking

- 5.18 The proposal seeks to utilise the existing access to the site which is within the ownership of the applicant.
- 5.19 The proposed dwelling includes a private driveway and car parking space for visitors together with a double garage deemed adequate for a proposal of this nature.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Ferguson Planning has been appointed by Buccleuch Estates Ltd (the applicant) to of a Full Planning Application for the conversion of an existing agricultural barn into a residential dwelling, together with associated infrastructure at Black Barn, Eckford, Kelso, TD5 8LF.
- 6.2 The proposal represents a sustainable form of development utilising a brown field site and redundant agricultural barn for residential development and one which relates well to the existing built form at Eckford Village. It is considered that the conversion of this structurally sound agricultural barn into a dwelling upon the site is to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy HD2. Whilst the proposal utilises this sustainable infill site, it will also contribute to the housing land supply with the borders as supported by Policy HD4.
- 6.3 The proposed barn has been carefully designed to create an attractive and usable residential dwelling with good levels of amenity for future occupiers whilst safeguarding the privacy of the neighbouring dwellings and providing good quality standards using sustainable methods and renewable technologies will be supported in accordance with Policies PMD1, PMD2 and HD3.
- 6.4 It is proposed utilise the existing vehicular access to the west. The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in transport terms.
- 6.5 Overall, the proposal is in accordance with relevant adopted Planning Policy of the Local Development Plan and wider planning material considerations. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan

