

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

8 JUNE 1998

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

ITEM: **REFERENCE NUMBER:** 97/00580/OUT

OFFICER: Barry Fotheringham

PROPOSAL: Residential Development

SITE: Site Adjacent to The Schoolhouse, Eckford Road, Eckford

APPLICANT: The Buccleuch Estates Ltd

AGENT: Cameron Farningham Associates

SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION :

The application site which is located on the south-east side of Eckford village, is bound to the west by the main road and to the east by the former Old School House (now a private dwelling), beyond which extends agricultural land. A private detached cottage and further open agricultural fields form the southern boundary and a small cluster of private detached dwellings form the northern boundary. The existing character of dwellings in the village comprises single storey detached dwellings with hipped slate roof and a wet dash finish.

The site itself is relatively flat and is bordered by hedgerows with a backdrop of hills to the east. An existing agricultural building falls within the confines of the site. The existing access to the site and the schoolhouse is located adjacent to the public road.

The application was initially for Outline Planning Consent for the erection of 8 detached dwellinghouses in generous plots served off an internal access road. Amended plans have since been submitted reducing the number of proposed dwellings to 4. Plots 3, 5, 7 and 8 have been omitted from the original plans. The application also includes the demolition of a farm building and the formation of a village green incorporating a play area.

PLANNING HISTORY :

In July 1990 an Outline Planning Application was approved, subject to conditions, for the erection of 5 dwellinghouses in the field on the east side of the main road, Eckford.

An Outline Application was also granted permission for the erection of 3 dwellinghouses on the same site in June 1991. Both applications have expired and are no longer valid.

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES :

Roxburgh Local Plan Policies 2, 5, 6 and 7 apply which states :

Policy 2

In the following settlements opportunities may exist for appropriate infill developments: Ancrum, Bonchester Bridge, Denholm, Hawick, Jedburgh, Kelso, Morebattle, Newcastleton Sprouston, Yetholm, and other villages as identified by Village Plans (See Para 2.9). Development Proposals should normally satisfy the following criteria :-

1. The proposal will not intrude into open countryside or have an adverse impact on the landscape;
2. The proposal will be consistent with, and complement, the character of the settlement;
3. The proposal will be consistent with, and conform to, the form of the settlement;
4. The proposal does not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of adjoining property;
5. Adequate access and servicing can be achieved;
6. Other policies of the local Plan are not prejudiced

Policy 5

Where settlement boundaries are defined, they indicate the extent to which towns and villages should be allowed to expand during the Local Plan period. All development related to these settlements should be contained within this boundary.

Policy 6

Village Plans, providing a guide for future development, will be produced in the following order of priority for the villages of Smailholm, Eckford, Minto, Oxnam, Nenthorn, Crailing, Chesters, Lanton and Roxburgh. Following the completion of the Village Plans either Policy 2 or Policy 3 will apply to all of the villages. In the interim a general policy of restraint will apply in these villages. Any development proposals should satisfy the following criteria:-

1. The proposal will not intrude into open countryside or have an adverse impact on the landscape;
2. The proposal will be consistent with, and complement, the character of the settlement;
3. The proposal will be consistent with, and conform to, the form of the settlement;
4. The proposal does not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of adjoining property;
5. Adequate access and servicing can be achieved;
6. Other policies of the Local Plan are not prejudiced.

OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS :

None.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES :

Councillor Robert M Rutherford :

No objections provided the dwellings are single storey. Councillor Rutherford however expressed concern about the location of the proposed play area adjacent to a busy road.

Director of Technical Services :

No objections.

Crailling, Eckford and Nisbet Community Council :

The Community Council objects to the proposal in principle as it would substantially alter the village boundary and set an undesirable precedent. However, they may be in a position to support the proposal provided reassurance is given on a number of points as listed in the copy correspondence.

East of Scotland Water :

No objections. A public sewer is not available to serve this site but a gravity water supply is available from the existing water services.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency :

No objection in principal. Recommend insertion of a planning condition referring to the requirement for maintenance of the sewage system. (please refer to copy correspondence).

Director of Planning and Development - Archaeology and Countryside :

The proposed development lies in the area of Eckford Tower, a site of archaeological importance. Therefore a condition securing the implementation of a programme of archaeological work should be attached to any permission which is granted.

OTHER RESPONSES :

One letter of objection was received from the public.

Pamela and Donald Newington, Littledene, Eckford, Kelso

- Much of the proposed development is to be sited out with the present village boundary which could set an undesirable precedent.
- If the application is approved, only bungalows should be erected

- Conditions should be imposed to prevent the development diverting from the original plan
- Sewage outflow appears to be overlooked. The existing burn exhibits signs of operating at maximum capacity.
- The Village Green/play area is inadequate and badly sited
- The development should have a time limit set on the construction period to avoid the village resembling a building site for an extended period.

PLANNING ISSUES :

The main issue in determining this application is:

(a) whether the development complies with the Local Plan Policies relating to settlement boundaries and housing in the countryside.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION :

Part of the application site, comprising two dwellings and a village green, is located on land within the Eckford settlement boundary and is identified as a favoured area for the development of 3 dwellings in the Village Plan. Whilst this part of the development proposal is acceptable in policy terms, the remainder of the application site, comprising of two dwellings falls outwith the settlement boundary for the village. Policy 5 of the Roxburgh Local Plan which applies to all Village Plans, states that all development should be contained within the respective settlement boundaries. That part of the development outwith the settlement boundary is therefore contrary to Local Plan Policy. When the settlement boundary was drawn, it was considered that the western boundary of the proposed area formed a strong edge to the village in this direction. I must therefore support the provision in the Local Plan and the Eckford Village Plan and oppose this application.

RECOMMENDATION BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT :

I recommend refusal of the application.
Reason: RHC1