

# **PLANNING STATEMENT**

# **SITE ADDRESS**

# LAND EAST OF DEUCHAR MILL HOUSE, YARROW, TD7 5LA

# **PROPOSAL**

# ERECTION OF A DWELLING TOGETHER WITH ACCESS, LANDSCAPING, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

# APPLICANT

**BUCCLEUCH ESTATES LTD** 

**APRIL 2021** 

RTPI Chartered Town Planner

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement, prepared by Ferguson Planning, is submitted to Scottish Borders Council on behalf of the Applicant Buccleuch Estates. The Statement supports an application for Planning Permission in Principle for erection of a dwelling together with access, landscaping, and associated works on land east of Deuchar Mill House, Yarrow.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to provide a good level of understanding of the application site and the context within which it lies, before providing background to the proposed development and its accordance with planning policy.
- 1.3 The site lies to the east of Deuchar Mill House and south of the A708. The site is bounded to the east by a large agricultural field. Deuchar Mill House is one of three existing dwellings sitting close to the west boundary of the site, the others being Deuchar Mill Cottage and Deuchar Mill. An existing access to the A708 lies adjacent to the north boundary of the site. An access track paved in tarmac concrete leads west from the highway access providing access to each existing dwelling.
- 1.4 The site itself comprises an open sided barn of fashioned steel construction covered in a profiled sheet roof together with a long established and compacted stone apron which provides a turning head and loading area, rough grass makes up the balance of the site. The barn is in good condition and in light use for storage of agricultural equipment although no livestock, harvest, fuel/diesel, or high value machinery/vehicles are stored on-site.
- 1.5 The site faces onto the paved access track and the A708 to the north. North of the A708 land rises towards the summit of Deuchar Hill (406 metres) and comprises part of the Tweedsmuir Uplands Special Landscape Area. The channel and bank of the Yarrow Water lie a short distance beyond the south boundary of the site.
- 1.6 The extract below indicates the application site in red together with other land within the Applicant's control in blue. The existing dwellings nearby and other buildings are also indicated.

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### F E R G U S O N PLANNING



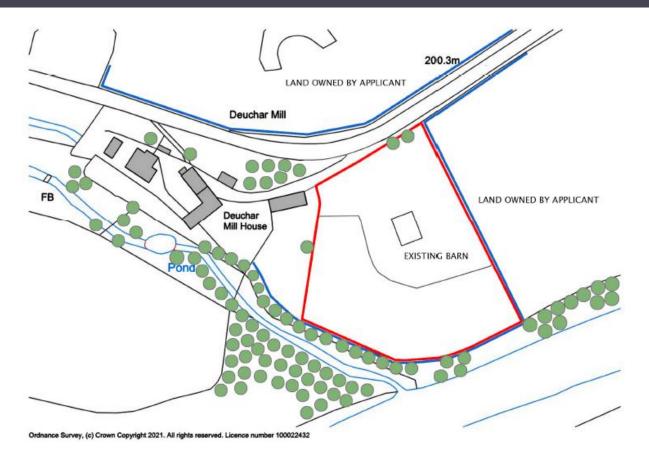


Fig 1: Extract from 10059-0-01 Location Plan (Source: Camerons Strachan Yuill Architects).

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### 2. THE PROPOSAL AND SITE CONTEXT

2.1 The layout and access arrangements of the proposed dwelling are conceptually illustrated on 10059-0-02 Site Plan – as Proposed. The proposal is for the erection of a dwelling together with access, landscaping, and associated works.



Fig 2: Extract from 10059-0-02 Site Plan – as Proposed (Source: Camerons Strachan Yuill Architects).

- 2.2 The new dwelling is proposed within the site to achieve reasonable proximity to the existing dwellings to the west and the access track to the north but is set back from both boundaries. Proposed residential accommodation would be split over two levels. It is likely this would take the form of a 1.5 or 2 storey dwelling.
- 2.3 Access is proposed to the site across the north boundary. Vehicles would access the site from the access track, slightly further west than existing arrangements, and would require to traverse the access track via its existing junction with the A708. Therefore, all traffic accessing the site would benefit from the same safety provisions available to existing users of the junction. The

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proposal also includes accommodation of a layby into the access track on land within the Applicant's ownership, thereby creating a passing place.

- 2.4 The proposed dwelling will be serviced by connection to a privately held septic tank and soakaways within the Applicant's control. The Applicant proposes to connect to the mains water network which has recently been renewed with substantially increased capacity in the Yarrow valley.
- 2.5 The garden of the proposed dwelling would be substantial, however it does sit commensurate with the gardens of other nearby existing dwellings. The proposal does not pursue a new pattern of development or seek to extend a linear developed ribbon into the open countryside.
- 2.6 As the application is for Planning Permission in Principle, the requirement to submit detailed drawings to secure the outstanding elements of the design in the next stage of the planning process is acknowledged.
- 2.7 Together with this Statement the following drawings and documents have been submitted to support the application:
  - Preliminary Ecological Assessment, prepared by Ellendale Environmental;
  - 10059-0-01 Location Plan, prepared by Camerons Strachan Yuill Architects;
  - 10059-0-02 Site Plan as Proposed, prepared by Camerons Strachan Yuill Architects; and
  - 10059-0-03 View of Proposed House in Context, prepared by Camerons Strachan Yuill Architects.

### **Development Pattern and History**

- 2.8 The local built environment has accreted and receded variously over past centuries. A corn mill operated at Deuchar Mill at least as early as 1858. That being the case, it is possible that the mill was established significantly earlier given that the Yarrow valley was not directly served by railway and the economic benefits thereof were not as profound locally in the early and mid 19th Century as was the case for either rural Peeblesshire or rural Roxburghshire.
- 2.9 At any rate, the Ordnance Survey Map of 1860 (based on a survey in 1858) clearly shows an L-plan, labelled, mill building and a further two buildings extending westward in linear form. A mill stream, neither bridged or culverted, is also identifiable flowing from the west towards the mill.
- 2.10 By 1898, the Ordnance Survey Map (revised in a 1897 survey) shows considerable distinction from the previous revision. Built form has moved considerably eastward, in the form of a new linear building sitting almost parallel to the road together with a hardstanding apron, marked

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in a closed line. It should be noted that a number of paths in and around the Deuchar Mill complex are marked in dashed lines on both the 1860 and 1898 editions; despite being unmarked on the earlier edition the hardstanding apron is sufficiently significant to be marked in a closed line in 1898. It is also clearly identifiable that the mill stream has been bridged or culverted adjacent to the east of the mill buildings in the 1898 edition with hardstanding apron extending onto the other side of the stream.

- 2.11 It is spatially significant that the apron noticeably extends beyond the dog-leg joint adjacent to the north of the site and possesses adequate depth to sit into the site. It is considered that the hardstanding apron extends either onto the footprint of the proposed dwelling or adjacent thereto.
- 2.12 The Ordnance Survey Map of 1965 shows the local area similar to its current situation. The mill stream is no longer visible either covered or its channel from the Yarrow Water blocked. For the first time the mill is not labelled and is considered very likely to be closed by that point. The hardstanding apron is still distinctly marked and doesn't appear to have been altered since the previous edition. Hard compacted stone is still visible today in the north portion of the site generally corresponding with the extent shown on the 1898 and 1965 OS Maps, albeit now considerably overlain.
- 2.13 Copies of each Ordnance Survey Map for Deuchar Mill can be found in Appendix 1. The remainder of this Statement considers relevant planning policy and thereafter provides a reasoned justification within the policy context.

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### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 This section provides an overview of key planning polices relevant to the proposed development. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) sets out national planning polices and is a key material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Development Plan is made up of the Strategic Development Plan for South East Scotland (SESPlan) and the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (2016).

### Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 2020

- 3.2 SPP supports the creation and protection of successful, sustainable places which support sustainable economic growth and regeneration, and the creation of well-designed, sustainable places. This outcome sits side-by-side with the other three outcomes which target the delivery of low carbon places which reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the changing climate, natural and resilient places which protect and enhance our natural and cultural assets, and better connected places which support and capitalises on transport and digital infrastructure.
- 3.3 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;

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- 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 In rural areas the Government intends the planning system to:
  - in all rural and island areas promote a pattern of development that is appropriate to the character of the particular rural area and the challenges it faces;
  - encourage rural development that supports prosperous and sustainable communities and businesses whilst protecting and enhancing environmental quality; and
  - support an integrated approach to coastal planning.

### Scottish Borders Local Development Plan

- 3.6 Local planning policy relevant to the proposal is contained within the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (2016). Key policies include:
  - Policy PMD1: Sustainability
  - Policy PMD2: Quality Standards
  - Policy HD2: Housing in the Countryside
  - Policy HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity
  - Policy EP5: Special Landscape Areas

### Policy PMD1: Sustainability

3.7 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:

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

### **Policy PMD2: Quality Standards**

- 3.8 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.

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• Retain physical or natural features which are important to the amenity or biodiversity of the area.

### Policy HD2: Housing in the Countryside

3.9 Section A of Policy HD2 addresses development proposals for housing related to existing Building Groups. The adopted text of section A has been copied below:

### "(A) Building Groups

Housing of up to a total of 2 additional dwellings or a 30% increase of the building group, whichever is the greater, associated with existing building groups may be approved provided that:

- a) the Council is satisfied that the site is well related to an existing group of at least three houses or building(s) currently in residential use or capable of conversion to residential use. Where conversion is required to establish a cohesive group of at least three houses, no additional housing will be approved until such a conversion has been implemented,
- b) the cumulative impact of new development on the character of the building group, and on the landscape and amenity of the surrounding area will be taken into account when determining new applications. Additional development within a building group will be refused if, in conjunction with other developments in the area, it will cause unacceptable adverse impacts,
- c) any consents for new build granted under this part of this policy should not exceed two housing dwellings or a 30% increase in addition to the group during the Plan period. No further development above this threshold will be permitted.

In addition, where a proposal for new development is to be supported, the proposal should be appropriate in scale, siting, design, access, and materials, and should be sympathetic to the character of the group."

#### **Policy HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity**

- 3.10 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,

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- *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."

### **Other Material Considerations**

### New Housing in the Borders Countryside SPG

- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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".
- 3.13 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".
- 3.14 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."
- 3.15 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."

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### 4. ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

### **Principle of Development**

- 4.1 The application site sits adjacent to and within the setting of the existing Building Group at Deuchar Mill. The Building Group comprises the existing dwellings Deuchar Mill House, Deuchar Mill Cottage, and Deuchar Mill. The development pattern comprising the existing dwellings is essentially a row of houses set back from the A708 to the south with access provided by the tarmac concrete access track. While the embankment supporting the A708 provides the enclosing boundary to the north, an established belt of mature trees encloses the Building Group to the west, and the riverbank falling away to the south represent distinct landscape features around the Building Group, there is no distinct landscape boundary to the east.
- 4.2 The site is not greenfield or undeveloped as it hosts an existing agricultural barn. While the barn comprises simple steel construction and is in low intensity agricultural use, it does represent part of the built environment although a more humble building than any of the three existing dwellings.
- 4.3 In addition to proposing erection of a new dwelling upon the site of the existing barn, which comprises part of the built environment, the proposal also includes a tree belt along the east boundary of the site. The proposed tree belt is considered to represent a distinct landscape feature which would enclose the Building Group and preclude further development eastward into the countryside. The proposal is considered to accord with criteria a) of Section (A) due to the position of the site in relation to the existing dwellings, the absence of any distinct landscape feature enclosing the existing Building Group to the east, and the inclusion of a new tree belt distinctly enclosing the Building Group to the east in the proposal.
- 4.4 A review of the Council's online planning records has indicated that no new or existing dwellings have been consented at Deuchar Mill within the current LDP period. The proposal is for the erection of a single dwelling within the setting and enlarging of an existing Building Group comprising three dwellings. While details of appearance, layout, and scale are deferred for future consideration, the type and form of development proposed are considered to be acceptable on the site.
- 4.5 The existing Building Group (including the barn on-site) defines visual aspects locally. The proposed tree belt would screen views into the site from the east, this is considered to represent an improvement in local character as views of an open sided steel barn would be replaced with one of a copse comprising nature tree species. Existing dwellings all but preclude views of the site from the west and so no impact on visual character would be created. Views from the north and south would represent replacement of a steel barn with a purpose-designed dwelling and are considered to be neutral, at worst.

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- 4.6 The existing Building Group locally comprises three existing dwellings, extension by two additional dwellings is allowed for by the Policy. The proposal is considered to accord with criteria c) of section (A) as no new dwellings have been consented within the current LDP period and one new dwelling is proposed.
- 4.7 The principle of development of the erection of a dwelling together with access, landscaping, and associated works is considered to be acceptable in accordance with section (A) of Policy HD2. The proposal represents the erection of a single dwelling expanding an existing Building Group in an appropriate fashion.

### Impacts on Local Character and Residential Amenity

- 4.8 The proposal has been prepared to provide for good amenity for the occupiers of the proposed dwelling and surrounding dwellings. The type of development (a single detached dwelling) is considered to be appropriate to the site and the local area. Consideration of whether the scale of the proposed development is suitable, is deferred for future consideration. However, it is considered that the indicative form shown on 10059-0-02 Proposed Site Plan and 10059-0-03 Proposed House Visualisation is broadly representative of appropriate development on the site. The site is considered to be sufficient in size to comfortably accommodate the proposed dwelling.
- 4.9 The location of the site is generally conducive to good residential amenity with three existing dwellings essentially forming the adjoining Building Group. Deuchar Mill House would be the closest existing dwelling and lies a short distance away separated by a stone dyke and a number of mature trees. The Applicant is content to secure appropriate boundary hedging and planting at the subsequent stage of the planning process to ensure that the occupants of each dwelling are provided with good quality amenity. While the tree belt defining the east boundary is material to the context of the existing Building Group, the amenity of both the proposed dwelling and existing dwellings will be enhanced with hedge planting.
- 4.10 Views of the site from public vantage points are primarily from the public road to the north. Visual impact from these viewpoints are addressed in paragraph 3.5. Overall the visual impact of the proposal on the local area is considered to be slight in degree.
- 4.11 As the proposal provides for good amenity on-site and in the surrounding area it is considered to accord with Policy HD3.

#### Ecology

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4.12 Ellendale Environmental were instructed by the Applicant and conducted a Preliminary Ecological Assessment on-site and in the contiguous fields. The Assessment did not identify natural habitat of protected species on-site.

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4.13 The Assessment detailed recommendations in section 5.2 which have been accepted by the Applicant.

### **Access and Parking**

- 4.14 The site is accessed by the existing tarmac concrete access track that serves the existing Building Group. The access track runs from the public road adjacent to the north of the site and connects with the other existing dwellings in the Building Group to the west. Therefore, vehicle access will be obtained from an existing access which operates safely.
- 4.15 The proposal includes space to park two cars within the short drive. This is considered to accord with the Parking Standards contained within Appendix 3 of the Local Development Plan 2016. These arrangements are considered to be acceptable to avoid the proliferation of accesses in the style of driveways which would cause the domestication of Deuchar Mill and erosion of the rural character.

### **Site Servicing**

4.16 The proposed dwelling will be serviced by connection to the mains water network. Foul and surface water drainage will be managed by connection to private means. The Applicant is content to secure connection details via condition.

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### 5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Ferguson Planning has been appointed by the Applicant to submit an application for Planning Permission in Principle for erection of a dwelling together with access, landscaping, and associated works on land east of Deuchar Mill House, Yarrow
- 5.2 The proposal represents the enlargement of an existing Building Group by one dwelling upon a site which is well related to the existing dwellings and includes formation of a distinct landscape feature to demarcate a boundary between the Building Group and the surrounding countryside. Therefore the erection of the proposed dwelling upon the site is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policy HD2(A).
- 5.3 The proposal has been designed in accordance with Policy HD3 and represents an acceptable form of development in this location. It is considered that the proposed dwelling would benefit from good amenity and safeguard the privacy of surrounding dwellings.
- 5.4 It is proposed to retain the existing vehicle access to serve the new dwelling. Two parking spaces are included within the proposal. The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in transport terms.
- 5.5 It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with relevant adopted policy of the Local Development Plan and is not afflicted by any other material considerations. It is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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**APPENDIX 1** Historic Maps extracts

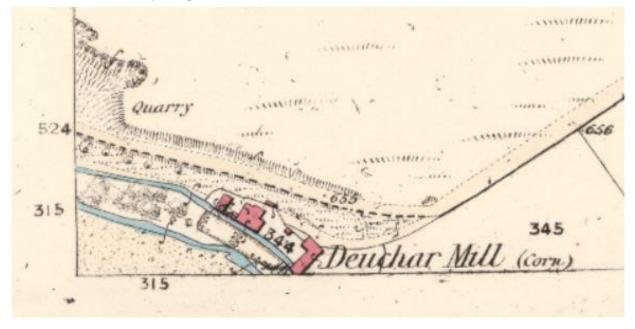
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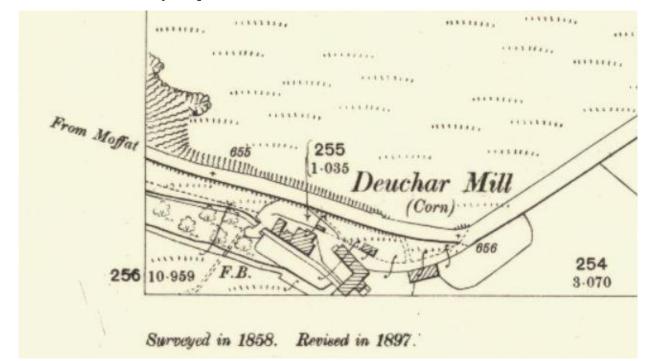




Ordnance Survey Map 1860



Ordnance Survey Map 1898



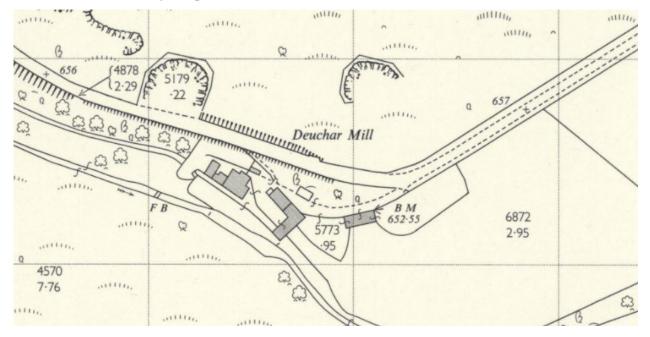
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Ordnance Survey Map 1965



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