

## Deuchar Mill, Yarrow, Selkirkshire, TD7 5LA

25th January 2022

Dear Ms McGeoch,

### Representation in respect of the Notice of Review 21/00041/RREF concerning Planning Application 21/00595/PPP re Land East of Deuchar Mill House, Yarrow, Selkirk, Scottish Borders

As the owner and resident of Deuchar Mill I would like to submit my representation in respect to the above Notice of Review submitted by Fergusson Planning on behalf of Buccleuch Estates. I ask that this will be taken into consideration along with my three letters of objection dated 17/05, 30/07 and 12/10 2021 when this Planning Appeal is reviewed by the Local Review Body in March.

#### Appeal Ground 1. Local Sense of Place and Setting

The Appellant states: *"the appeal site lies within the setting and forms part of an existing Building group at Deuchar Mill as it currently exists and that the proposed dwelling would enhance the defined sense of place". 3.3.*

As the name suggests the Building group at Deuchar Mill, comprising Mill House, Mill Cottage and Mill, are grouped to either side of Deuchar Mill itself to form a unity. Accessed by a shared track (with no barriers between properties), the track descends steeply off the A708 curving round to near river level: only Deuchar Mill cottage is visible from the road.(Fig 1.)



To the West side of Deuchar Mill, the Mill and Mill house share an open area between houses (Fig 1.), and to the East side of Deuchar Mill, the gable end of Deuchar Mill Cottage is incorporated into the garden dyke of Deuchar Mill. (see below Fig 4).

The Appeal site for the proposed house would **not** share *this interrelated unity* of grouping within its setting. It would stand alone *at road level with pronounced visual impact* (as noted by the Planning Officer: Report of Handling). It would **not** share the nestled topographical *sense of place* afforded by the steep incline of the Mill Group *Setting* (see also Fig 2.). With a proposed new access (120 metres to East) and a new drive/road (already made *in behind the auld dyke*) leading to the proposed house, *coupled with* the proposed blocking off of the existing access to the Stackyard (the site), the proposed house would be *distinctly separate* from the Building Group. It would not share an intimate relationship with the existing Building Group. **It would be an entirely new standalone building.**

### Appeal Ground 1. Boundary and Landscape feature (Appellant Review 3.4-15)

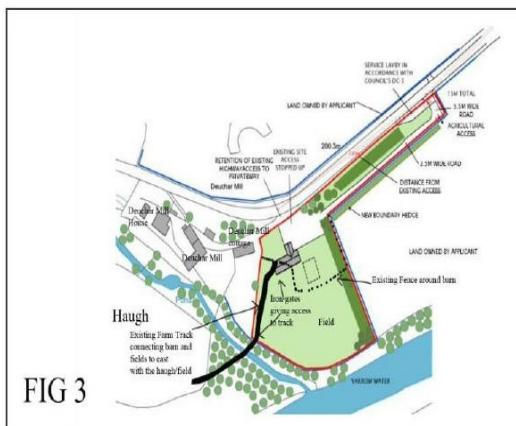
The East Boundary of Deuchar Mill Cottage and Building Group.

The Appellant questions the assertion that the East boundary of Deuchar Mill cottage represents a distinct landscape feature which encloses the Building Group from the open countryside beyond. And suggests it is “*factually incorrect and untenable*”. How so?

The East boundary of Deuchar Mill Cottage comprises dyke, mature conifers (as shown in Appellant's Fig 2), and then *in continuation* (not mentioned or represented by the Appellant) in an east-southerly direction for *the full length* of the property boundary a mature beech hedgerow planted some 45 years ago. This *full* boundary is marked in red on the photograph below (Fig 2). Taken from the field beyond (part of the proposed site) the photograph looks to the enclosing boundary, across to the Mill and beyond up the valley to the West. (Fig 2).



In my *letter of objection* to the original Planning Application (dated 17th May under **4. Site and Rural Impact**) I included a photograph of this *distinct boundary* of Deuchar Mill Cottage showing the **beech hedge** and in addition the *longstanding farm track* following the contour of the hill and running parallel to the hedge. This **track** reinforces this easterly/southerly boundary of Deuchar Mill Cottage (marked in **green** Fig 2). **Both**, contrary to the Appellant's claim, *enclose* the existing Building Group at Deuchar Mill from the farmland beyond to the east. Guidance for *New Houses in the Borders Countryside* identify such boundaries as defining a Building Group and contributing to a sense of place. *In addition* in my letter of objection I noted that the **farm track** purposefully connects the barn and fields to the East with the haugh/field in front of the Deuchar Mill making a viable farming unit, around the Building Group. The proposed house/site would **block off this track** and disrupt the viability of this farming unit contrary to *Borders Countryside Planning Guidance*. (See below Fig 3. existing track outlined in **black** on the Appellant's Site Map).





### Appeal Ground 1. Boundary and Landscape feature continued

It seems there is a misapprehension in the Appellant's submitted Review Statement that boundaries for a Building Group in the countryside need to *screen off* dwellings from the fields, hills and farming that surrounds them and vice versa to be a landscape feature. **They do not.** The Appellant writes of the "*diminutive*" structure of the dyke boundary by Deuchar Mill Cottage as "*insufficiently tall to even preclude views to and from the existing ground floor window*", as reason for it not being a distinct landscape feature. 3.6

Whilst next to this dyke on the existing boundary the tall conifers *were* planted to *screen* the ugly electrical service junction in the Stackyard, the mentioned *diminutive* dyke *allows* for the view from the window of the cottage to the given topography of hills beyond and for early morning sun. This is a choice, a framing of landscape (which culturally landscape is) and therefore a feature. Likewise in continuation of the boundary the *modest* height of the mature beech hedge similarly allows for the view to the hills to be part of the garden. As it is also for the Mill.



The photograph above (Fig 4) taken from the attic of Deuchar Mill illustrates this Building Group and cottage boundary of conifers and beech hedge (*dotted in red*) and the sensitive landscape shaping of this Building group to land and to the east: settled and viewed within the natural topography of sloping field beyond, to the hills in the distance and snaking curve of the alder trees following of the course of the Yarrow Water. Likewise to the West in the photograph Fig 2, the Building Group and prominent Mill are settled to their surroundings, becoming *part* of the landscape and its features.

Why **screen** that?

The Appellant's proposed belt of trees as *screen and landscape feature* would at full height block off this natural landscape topography from the Building Group, and so rather than creating a positive landscape feature **would in fact do the reverse.**

## Ground 2. Access and Road Safety

I raised my concerns regarding the *new* proposed access off the A708 for the Proposed house in my letter of objection dated 12th October. And would like to refer the Review Body to this.

I would like to point out again however, that the "*existing field gate*" (for the proposed access) referred to by the Appellant (1.6), had been **out of use** as an agricultural access for at least 30 years, until this Autumn when the revised Planning Application was lodged 22nd Sept..

As part of access I would also like to point out that "*the new hard surfaced track*" extending from this gate to the Planning Site, which appears in the submitted Review Statement and Plan (fig 2)) was **not** constructed by Scottish Water for their own use as the Appellant *claims* (1.6) but constructed at the request of Buccleuch. All the background detail to the making of this road can be found in my photographic record and correspondence(12th Oct) and that of my neighbour Gillean Hoehnke (17th Sept )sent to Brett Taylor, Planning Officer. This track which is more like a road does not appear to have got Planning permission and was referred in October to Planning Enforcement Ref 21/00167/UNDEV-Deuchar Mill - Formation of access track.

This case will now not proceed until the outcome of the Appeal is decided.

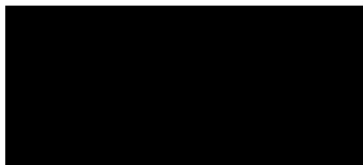
**A708** In the Review Statement the Appellant discusses regulation re new accesses onto A class roads and trunk roads. (3.26).

While the A708 may not officially be designated as a *trunk road*, there is no doubt the increased transport of *goods* in logistic lorries and delivery vans from west to east and vice versa it has become exactly that. The A708 has become a busy and dangerous road. Witnessing, as I did, the toppling over of the Dumfries Logistics lorry (over taking a tractor and trailer) at Foulshiels was a salutary experience. Vehicles travel along at great speed: lorries, large vans, huge agricultural machinery, cars *and* speeding teams of bikers.

I agree with the Road's Dept decision that the new access onto the A708 so close to the corner east will impact on road safety.

In conclusion to my above observations on the Grounds for Appeal submitted in the Review Statement by Fergusson Planning on behalf of Buccleuch I support the refusal of Planning Application 21/00595/PPP dated 21st October 2021 and reject the Appeal 21/00041/RREF.

With Kind Regards



Dr Helen Douglas