

Application Ref.22/00296/FUL

**Erection of dwellinghouse at
Land north and east of Tweed Lodge, Hoebridge East Road, Gattonside**

Response to Consultations and Representations

Statutory Consultees

Scottish Water

No objection, comments noted

SBC Roads Planning

Further information requested is attached with block plan showing how parking and turning are provided within the curtilage of the property

SBC Contaminated Land

No objection, condition required for site investigation which is accepted.

Melrose Community Council

No objection, noted that statutory representative of local community has raised no issues with proposal.

SBC Heritage & Design Officer

The Officer has noted the visibility of the site from the B6360 and glimpsed views from the river and this, coupled with its location within a Conservation Area, requires a high quality design with high quality materials. The application red-line boundary is slightly different from that of the extant planning permission ref.19/01753/PPP for a single dwellinghouse on the site but the principle of development is therefore established. The applicant agrees with the officer that a high quality design response is required rather than a standard house design. It should also be noted that views from the B6360 are also only glimpsed by passing road users and there is limited pedestrian traffic. This has been further illustrated in the attached **Location Map** and **North Elevation** which shows the proposed massing broken down with existing Tweed Lodge to the rear.

The Officer contends that existing flat-roof houses within Gattonside are generally single storey and less prominent than the proposal. The variety of contemporary house designs evident within the village is illustrated within sections 4.1 to 4.6 of the Design Document. A further example of a two storey flat roof house within a Conservation setting at North Berwick is provided at section 4.7. These images demonstrate that a contemporary flat roof structure does not have to be single storey to create a high quality design solution. It is considered that this variety, including two storey examples, adds to the character of this Conservation village and provides a strong basis for continuation of the contemporary approach at the application plot. A traditional pitched roof design approach would not be appropriate in this context. The attached **Site Appraisal** illustrates the design process that has been undertaken which considered pitched roofs but which ultimately created a greater massing impact than the flat roof solution. The materials are detailed further within the attached proposed elevations.

The extent of information provided was satisfactory for registration of the planning application and the Design Document fully outlines analysis and design development. However, the attached more **detailed elevations, site plan, Location Map** showing **plot context and Site Appraisal** provides further clarity as an addendum to the previously submitted information.

With regard to building design comments, the officer does accept that a contemporary design is acceptable but the proposed house occupies a greater footprint than that of the previous planning consent and sits hard up against the site boundary. The footprint of the house (160m² plus 30m² garage) can be accommodated within the plot (731m²) with a built ratio of 25% including garage which is less than many houses in the village, as illustrated on the attached **Location Map**. As indicated in the submission documents, the applicant owns the land to the east of the plot and can therefore facilitate building of the house on the site boundary so there is no reason why the house cannot be sited in this fashion.

With respect to the proposed buildings inter-relationship with The Hoebridge eaves and ridge height, the attached **elevations (West and East)** illustrate that the proposed house sits well below The Hoebridge ridge height with a similar eaves level.

The proposed massing is not inappropriate given the range of building design in the local vicinity. Breaking up of the massing has already been undertaken as is evident from the attached North and South elevations which illustrate the two storey elements linked by a single storey central area. The design allows for family accommodation whilst considering the privacy of neighbouring properties and provides a structural simplicity and purity in its form that which reduces the overall impact and volume.

Materials proposed allow for a simple palette which can be layered and broken up with planting and the proposed old brick perimeter wall. The proposed wall detail reflects the existing historic walls within the village which ties the contemporary design into its context.

As noted in the Officer comments, a contemporary design approach is acceptable. Diluting a bold contemporary design and creating a compromised house is not the approach to be taken at this plot. The design proposals provide for a building that will add to the character and variety of Gattonside.

In terms of landscape integration, the proposal provides for planting along the eastern plot boundary within the applicant ownership. An indicative **landscape plan** is attached to this response which elaborates on proposals. However, the final form and planting schedule can be a condition of planning approval as the land in question is within the applicant's ownership, as bound in blue on the application location plan (as detailed in Circular 4/1998, annex A, section 3). The use of walling as well as soft landscaping is considered wholly appropriate given the variety of examples of this approach in the village.

SUDS details have also been added to the site plan.

Third Party Comments

It is noted that there are 7 No. letters of support and just 3 No. letters of objection to the proposal.

In terms of specific comments, the proximity to Tweed Lodge was considered in the Planning Officer's pre-application consultation response which confirmed that a two storey proposal would have no greater impact than the agricultural barn it replaced in terms of loss of light and indeed the flat roof design assists with mitigating any further impact. There are no windows at first floor level looking south towards Tweed Lodge so there are no privacy issues. The applicant would also point out that the barn was a large structure of corrugated metal and block work that was sited tight to Tweed Lodge to the south as can be seen from the site photographs below. The proposed house is more proportionally distributed within

the plot and landscape and use of high quality materials and landscaping mitigates impact further.



Above - Former barn adjacent to Tweed Lodge



Above - Former barn materials



Above - Former barn with The Hoebidge to east



Above – Former barn proximity to Tweed Lodge

The proposed materials have been explained in the Design Document and form a fundamental aspect of the design. Good design should appreciate its context but does not have to 'blend in'. The materials are further detailed on the attached elevations.

The extension of the private garden ground outwith the settlement boundary has also been accepted by the Planning Officer's pre-application consultation response. There will be no built form in this area and as supported by the planner, the proposal will allow for a stronger settlement edge with use of appropriate landscaping.

Issues of drainage do not present a planning concern and can be addressed at technical design stage.

Positioning of windows have been carefully considered to ensure privacy for neighbouring properties and also provide protection from the smells/noise from the existing restaurant.

The principle of development on the plot has been established.

Summary

The applicant notes the comments received including the lack of any statutory consultee objections other than the Council's Heritage Officer. It is appreciated that good design is subjective and a contemporary approach to the redevelopment of this plot will not be acceptable to all. However, it is considered that the proposal will provide a high quality design response to this site and can be justified through the numerous examples throughout Gattonside and the Borders generally where contemporary design has been welcomed.

It is also noted that the Community Council have not objected as the community representative and third party concerns, whilst appreciated, have been addressed in this application.

Additionally, the applicant wishes to demonstrate their commitment to the local area and has provided a **Personal Statement** which is also attached.

We would trust these comments will be taken into consideration in determination of this application.

Aitken Turnbull Architects
13th May 2022