

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

**APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED UNDER POWERS DELEGATED TO
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER**

PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)

REF : 19/00924/FUL
APPLICANT : Eildon Holiday Cottages
AGENT : AMS Associates Ltd
DEVELOPMENT : Erection of 2 No holiday lodges
LOCATION: Land South East Of Dingleton Mains
Dingleton Road
Melrose
Scottish Borders

TYPE : FUL Application

REASON FOR DELAY:

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Plan Ref	Plan Type	Plan Status
(PL)001 rev 1	Proposed Plans	Approved
9400A, 9403A, 100, 101,102	Proposed Plans	Approved
3-- P01	Landscaping Plan	Approved

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 0
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

There have been no representations.

CONSULTATIONS:

Roads Planning Service: I have no objections to the principle of this application. The road serving the site is single track with verges however it would benefit from the provision of passing places to assist with access. The impact of these not being provided will not however have any effect on the public road but it would be in the applicant's interest to improve the access.

The parking spaces shown, particularly for the easterly lodge, appear to be on restrictive in size. Any parking space should be a minimum of 2.5m x 6m in size to ensure vehicles do not overhang and block the access track.

Community Council: Support this application on principle as it is creating extra business and widening the range of available accommodation within the tourism industry which is vital in Melrose area.

There were a few concerns raised at our recent Community Council meeting where this proposal was discussed:

- o The single-track access road: this proposal will most likely increase traffic on this road then perhaps passing places may be required.
- o The visual impact these buildings and road would have being viewed by the many walkers from the Eildon Hills.

o It would be preferable to see the proposed structures kept nearer the existing building group to reduce the visual impact of this site rather two structures and a road being dotted within this grass field.

Environmental Health: Quiet rural location with only the neighbouring uses being existing holiday cottages and a riding school. Existing amenity is unlikely to be affected by this proposed development.

Economic Development: Economic Development will support this application as it fits with the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy by:

- o Increasing volume of overnight visitors.
- o Increasing overnight visitor spend.
- o Ensure the Region's accommodation offerings meet consumer demands and where opportunities are available can act as an attractor of demand in themselves.
- o Ensure a relevant range of types of accommodation is available across the Region to meet evolving market demand and expectations. Identify opportunities where better quality and new products can 'lead' and generate new demand and continue to raise average quality quotient across all forms of accommodation.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- o Supporting Statement

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:

Local Development Plan 2016

- PMD1: Sustainability
- PMD2: Quality Standards
- PMD4: Development Outwith Development Boundaries
- ED7: Business, Tourism and Leisure Development in the Countryside
- HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity
- EP4: National Scenic Areas
- EP6: Countryside around Towns
- EP13: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- IS7: Parking Provisions and Standards
- IS9: Waste Water Treatment Standards and Sustainable Urban Drainage

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

- Countryside around Towns 2011
- Placemaking and Design 2010
- Householder Development (Privacy and Sunlight) 2006
- Trees and Development 2008
- Landscape and Development 2008

Recommendation by - Julie Hayward (Lead Planning Officer) on 2nd September 2019

Site and Proposal

Dingleton Mains is situated to the east of Melrose, outwith the Development Boundary and within the National Scenic Area. It comprises of the farmhouse and steading buildings that have been converted into holiday accommodation. The complex is accessed from Dingleton Road by an access road that also serves the golf club. The complex is surrounded by fields, the golf club is to the south west and there is a woodland to the west through which the Malthouse Burn flows.

The proposal is to erect two timber holiday lodges in a field to the east of the existing complex. These would be 9m by 3.6 and 6.25m in height, with Douglas fir with larch cladding stained with a grey finish. Each would be one-and-a-half storey with two bedrooms, a lounge/kitchen/dining room and area of external timber decking.

An access track would be formed from crushed stone for the existing road that serves the farmhouse and holiday units. On-site parking and turning is proposed. The units would connect to the mains water supply and sewer. Landscaping is proposed within the field, including parkland trees, new woodlands and hedgerows.

Planning History

97/05594/FUL: Alterations to holiday cottages. Approved 5th march 1997.

97/05595/FUL: Conversion of outbuildings to holiday cottages. Approved 30th May 1997.

18/01736/FUL: Erection of 2 No holiday lodges. Approved 7th March 2019

Planning Policy and Principle

The site is within the Countryside around Towns area, designated in the Local Development Plan. Proposals will only be considered if there is an essential requirement for a rural location and the use is appropriate to a countryside setting, it involves the rehabilitation, conversion or limited extension or change of use of an existing traditional building of character or enhance the landscape, trees, woodland, natural and man-made heritage, access or recreational facilities or has a national or strategic need.

The site is outwith the Development Boundary for Melrose and policy PMD4 states that Development Boundaries indicate the extent to which towns should be allowed to expand during the Local Development Plan period. Development should be contained within the Development Boundary and development outwith this boundary should normally be refused. The policy contains exceptions to this, including job creating development that has an economic justification under policy ED7.

Policy ED7 of the Local Development Plan 2016 states that proposals for tourism development in the countryside will be approved provided that the development is to be used directly for tourism appropriate to a countryside location and is in accordance with the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.

The Supporting Statement advises that this proposal would provide two holiday units close to an existing complex of holiday accommodation (six self-catering cottages). These have an 80% occupancy rate and five are designed for wheelchair users and offer special facilities for disabled guests. The lodges proposed would be a different offer, aimed at younger people.

The lodges would be located adjacent to an existing and successful holiday complex, where there are no buildings that could be converted.

The site has Planning Permission for two holiday units and this application seeks to revise the proposal and so the principle has been accepted in this location.

The Economic Development Section is supportive of the application as it fits with the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy 2013-2020 strategic target.

A condition will ensure that the unit is used only for holiday accommodation.

Siting and Design

Policy ED7 requires that the development meets the siting and design criteria of policy PMD2; this policy requires all development to be of high quality in accordance with sustainability principles, designed to fit in with Borders townscapes and to integrate with its landscape surroundings. The policy contains a number of standards that would apply to all development.

The site is well related to the existing farmhouse and holiday complex. This part of the field is relatively flat and the spacing between the units is acceptable, as it allows planting to take place.

The proposal is to change the type of lodges proposed. The current proposal is for larger, one-and-a-half storey lodges and the applicant advises that the cost of the lodges approved now makes the scheme unviable and the proposed lodges better suit his vision for the holiday complex and current demand. These are timber clad with overhanging roofs. The design and materials are considered to be acceptable, given the applicant's requirements, the small scale of the development and the location.

Impact on Visual Amenities

Policy ED7 requires that the development respects the amenity and character of the surrounding area. Policy EP4 states that development that may affect the National Scenic Area will only be permitted where the objectives of the designation and overall landscape value of the site and its surroundings will not be compromised and any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the site or its surrounds have been designated are clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of national importance.

The site would not be prominent from Dingleton Road due to the topography of the surrounding land and intervening tree belts. The site is at the foot of the Eildon Hills and so is visually sensitive. Concern has been expressed that the development would be prominent when viewed from the Eildon Hills.

The proposed lodges are significantly larger than those previously approved. The applicant has agreed to sedum roofs for both lodges which would minimise any visual impact. In addition, a detailed planting scheme has been submitted to help integrate the development into the landscape as this is an open field used for grazing. Tree planting is proposed around the units and parkland trees within the field. The planting, once mature, would screen the units from view. A condition will secure its implementation and maintenance.

Road Safety, Access and Parking

Policy ED7 states that the development must take into account accessibility considerations. Policy IS7 requires that car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

An access would be formed onto the access road and space for car parking space is proposed adjacent to each unit.

The Roads Planning Service has no objections to the principle of this application. They advise that the road serving the site is single track with verges but would benefit from the provision of passing places to assist with access. The impact of these not being provided will not however have any effect on the public road but it would be in the applicant's interest to improve the access.

The agent submitted a drawing showing four existing passing places on this access road with the previous application. A condition will ensure that the parking spaces are of the size requested by the Roads Planning Service

Water and Drainage

Policy IS9 states that the preferred method of dealing with waste water associated with new development would be a direct connection to the public sewerage system.

The units would be served by the mains water supply and mains sewer via the existing connections at the steading. Surface water would be to a soakaway.

REASON FOR DECISION :

Subject to compliance with the schedule of conditions, the development will accord with the relevant provisions of the Local Development Plan 2016 and there are no material considerations that would justify a departure from these provisions.

Recommendation: Approved subject to conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the plans and specifications approved by the Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

- 2 The development hereby approved shall be occupied for holiday use only and shall not be used as a person's sole or main residence or as temporary or permanent residential accommodation. The occupation of the holiday units shall be restricted to genuine holidaymakers for individual periods not exceeding 4 weeks in total within any consecutive period of 13 weeks. The operator shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all holiday makers staying in the holiday units and their main home addresses. This information shall be made available for inspection at all reasonable times by an authorised officer of the Planning Authority.
Reason: The accommodation on the site is not designed for permanent occupation and permanent residential use would be contrary to the council's housing in the countryside policies.
- 3 Details of the colour finish of the walls, doors and windows of the lodges to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before the development commences. The walls to have a natural finish or stain and the lodges to have sedum roofs. The development then to be completed in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: Further consideration is required in respect of the finishes to safeguard the visual amenities of the area.
- 4 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and shall be maintained thereafter and replaced as may be necessary for a period of two years from the date of completion of the planting, seeding or turfing.
Reason: To ensure that the proposed landscaping is carried out as approved.
- 5 Detail of any proposed signage within or around the site to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before the signage is erected (location, dimensions, material, design, colours and method of illumination). The signage then to be erected in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the area.
- 6 The access and parking shown on the approved drawings to be provided for each unit prior to occupation and retained in perpetuity. The parking spaces to be a minimum of 2.5m by 6m.
Reason: To ensure on-site parking is available for visitors and to ensure that vehicles do not overhang and block the access track.

“Photographs taken in connection with the determination of the application and any other associated documentation form part of the Report of Handling”.