

**Design Statement in support of the
Demolition of Redundant Buildings and Replacement with New Dwelling-house
2 Miller Street, Innerleithen
Alexander Clapperton**

Background

The site lies at the Eastern end of Miller Street. Miller Street itself consist largely of 2.5 storey tenements on both sides of the road. The site sits at the east end of the Northern row of tenements and is bounded to the east by a tenement facing Waverley Road, also in the ownership of the applicant.

To the north there are gardens and open spaces created around the houses known as Runic Cross and Runic Cross Cottage. The boundaries around the site are largely by stone walls and these will be retained and repaired as required.

Within the site there are a number of sub-standard or temporary buildings which will be removed to make way for the new house and gardens. However, a traditional vernacular light industrial building (last used for extraction of water from a sub-artesian well) which is built on the western boundary of the site will be retained and used for studio and workspace associated with the new house.

The existing vehicular access into the site is to be retained.

The Proposal

The use as a light industrial is no longer a requirement of the current owner who has had the site for many years. Latterly the site was let to a company for water extraction and bottling but they have since relocated.

Apart from the aforementioned traditional workshop, the other buildings and structures have no architectural merit.

The proposed house has its principal elevation facing Miller Street, set back to create a front garden and maintain the character of open space currently offered between the tenements either side. The setting back of the house also enables the house to enjoy the sun during the day which would be otherwise shaded by the tenements to the south.

The new structure is to be a detached dwelling house. It respects the need for rear garden, whilst also having a generous front garden. The massing is 1.5 storey and developed using heights and roof pitches synonymous with the surrounding architecture to the North.

Justification

The current site is light industrial and although let in recent years no longer gives an income to the owners who have owned and occupied the site for many years. The owners are approaching retirement age and wish to remain in the locality. They are keen gardeners and as such the open space around the new house will be an asset to the amenity of Miller Street.

Design Practices and Parameters

- The massing of the new building respects the existing vernacular store and the houses to the North.
- Setting the house back on the site to create a front garden respects the open nature of the site (presently cluttered with temporary structures) as a clearing between tenements.
- The boundary walls will be retained, a strong element of the site in its placing on Miller Street
- 3 in-curtilage car spaces have been included in the design.
- A true 'room in the roof' solution has been developed without dormers, maintaining a clean roof line un-fettered by dormers.
- The external finishes shall be simple and synonymous with other new housing in the Scottish Borders, using a blend of scratchcoat render, with grey plain tiles and white windows/doors.

Flood Risk

In accordance with the flood study carried out by JBA Consulting for Scottish Borders Council, Miller Street may be prone to flooding in the event of a 1 in 200 year flood event. The flood study shows a risk of potentially 250mm depth of water.

We asked our Consulting Engineer to consider the implication of this. I quote extracts from his e-mail to Scottish Borders Council :

“There is extensive flood analysis publicly available at this location and I consequently see no value in commissioning a further study. Your own JBA Consulting flood study determines that the 1 in 200 year flood event produces 250mm of floodwater in Miller Street, so we have the information readily available to allow at least notional levels of construction to be determined”.

He goes on to say:

“Further to the e-mail of 2nd November (2020), sent by Kanak Bose, I have reviewed the available documentation and am writing to support an argument made in that missive. I further propose that consideration be given to setting a notional datum (Finished Floor Level) at 600mm above pavement level.”

Therefore, on the site-plan I have set the floor level of the new house 600mm above the pavement level at the entry point of the site on Miller Street. Pavement level was ascertained using Ordnance Survey data.

Notwithstanding this, I propose the following course of action as regards mitigation of risk from flooding :

- 1 The applicant and any future occupants of the dwelling will be asked to sign up to 'FLOODLINE' so as SEPA can notify them in the event of potential flood risk.
- 2 The adoption of water resilient materials to be used for the construction of the new dwelling.
- 3 Temporary flood gates are able to be fitted to the principal doors into the dwelling with an effective height of 600mm.
- 4 A method statement for an evacuation plan is carried out and kept within the dwelling adjacent to the sustainability label and the EPC as required by Building Standards.

Conclusion

No 2 Miller Street as a light industrial site has reached the end of its useful career.

As such the site then has the potential for redevelopment and it is proposed that a modest 3-bedroom house is be constructed for the owners who are long-standing members of the Innerleithen community and reaching retirement age.

In particular the ground floor has been designed to offer enhanced living accommodation with accessibility in mind.

The new property offers a blend of open space coupled with built space and gives inside/outside living facilities appropriate to 21st Century living in Scotland.

Kanak Bose
Ogscastle

15th May 2021

