

Your Ref: **10/00721/LBC & 10/00720/FUL** Our Ref: **1221**
Subject: **Internal and external alterations and refurbishment**
Abbotsford House
Melrose
-
Date: **21-Jun-10**

the
Tobacco Merchants
House
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Charles Abram
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Paul Smart
Robert Wilson

The Trust has examined this application by The Abbotsford Trust for the above and wishes to comment as follows:

The Trust has no objection to the proposed designs for the new Visitor Centre. The building seems to be designed to sit comfortably within its landscape setting and it would make an attractive and contemporary addition to the estate.

However our main concern is the condition and future of the stables. The stables are included in the Defining Issues of the Design Statement due to their condition and need for a sustainable new use. The stables have been on the Buildings at Risk Register since 2001.

The Trust is disappointed that this application does not bring forward any proposals for the stables site, apart from some repairs to stabilise the deteriorating condition of the building.

While reasons have been given to justify building a new Visitor Centre rather than reuse the existing stables, the Trust is unconvinced by this justification. Firstly, the prohibitive costs of restoration are used as a reason not to reuse the building. The Trust feels this is an unacceptable argument given that any new use of the building will have to incur the costs of restoration. It must be acknowledged that the stables will require significant investment to bring them back into use and as long as this is seen as a preventing factor, the building will continue to languish in its current state. We do feel that the huge benefit to be gained from restoring and reusing this A-listed building outweighs the potential negatives listed. The added value of reusing a significant listed building and part of the historic estate group is not acknowledged in the Design Statement.

We do not object to the proposed new Visitor Centre or the alterations to Abbotsford House. However, the Trust feels that a new use must be found for the stables as soon as possible and we would urge the Abbotsford Trust and Scottish Borders Council to pursue this with urgency.

Gemma Wild

Gemma Wild
Technical Officer (Conservation and Design)

To Head of Planning & Building Standards, Scottish Borders Council

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts
Application for Planning Permission and/or Listed Building Consent, etc.



cc Historic Scotland (Ros Downing)
AHSS

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