

**Request for Review of Refusal of Planning Permission in Principle  
Reference Number: 19/02157/PPP**

We wish to appeal the decision.

The Reason for Refusal states that the application site is located within a notable area of woodland and that the erection of a dwelling on the site would represent an unacceptable degree of intrusion resulting in an undermining of the structure and character of the landscape; we disagree. Whilst there is a strip of mature woodland adjoining the eastern boundary, it is important to point out, that prior to 1988, the site was a field (Figure 1) and whilst planted then predominantly with cherry, birch, oak and beech, it was never managed and consequently many of these were lost to wind, deer and rabbit damage.

Figure 1



So much so, that there are large areas free of significant trees. The proposed site is one of these areas. Furthermore, many of the cherry trees are diseased and cankered, having reached the end of their expected 25 to 30-year life, and are being removed as necessary. Overall, it is estimated that approximately 20 of these trees would need to be removed in total. Pic. 1 to Pic. 4 shows a typical selection of these; the majority of which are cherry. Over the past ten years we have planted oak, lime, birch, rowan, hazel and spruce, along with many shrubs within the area surrounding the plot.





View of plot looking south. Mature boundary woodland on left, trees on right to be removed.



Plot looking north showing trees to be removed.

The Reason for Refusal also states that only applications for infill, redevelopment and rounding off will be supported. The track the proposed dwelling will use, is also the main access to Balmory Road for three other properties. The position of the proposed dwelling is such (Figure 1) that we believe it should be treated as either 'infill' or 'rounding off'.

We also believe that the application should be considered as an exceptional case. Living in our present sizeable home for 10 years has been wonderful, but now, as we approach our 80's we need to consider more manageable options for our future. With over 90% of the island owned by Mount Stuart, who rarely offer building plots for sale, suitable rural opportunities to invest and build a house of the quality envisaged (Figure 2), are not available.

*Figure 2*



**In conclusion:**

1. We do not agree that the erection of a dwelling in this location would undermine the structure and character of the landscape. On the contrary, we believe that the dwelling would be an important addition to Bute's housing stock;
2. The proposed position, with access onto the existing track, complements the other three properties using the track as their main access (The Huf Haus, Balmory Cottage, Beech Cottage) and as such should be considered as "infill" or "rounding-off".
3. Depopulation of Bute is a major concern and with over 90% of the island owned by Mount Stuart, suitable plots for those wishing to invest and build a house of this quality, are not available. Unlike Skye and Harris for example; quality sites are readily available and have attracted considerable investment in the building of innovative dwellings out with towns and villages. In several ways this has been of benefit to the economy in general and provides significant additional income to the Local Authority.
4. Prior to the 2009 Development Plan, this site was a Rural Opportunity Area and would more than likely have been approved for a dwelling. Subsequent Development Plans have changed this to a 'Countryside' Zone with greater restrictions. We believe the construction of an appropriate dwelling would not detract from the landscape value, or have an adverse effect on the Isle of Bute Area of Panoramic Quality.

Tony Harrison – 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020