

David Butterworth [via email]

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

3rd November 2017

Dear David

Concerns regarding YDNPA policies on barn conversion

Friends of the Dales has been monitoring the planning applications for barn conversion since the introduction of the new Local Plan. It is concerned about aspects of the working of the policy which permits the conversion for residential purposes of barns regarded as being “roadside”.

There has been a spate of applications for such conversions since the new policy was introduced, and the following points have been made recently by members of our Policy Committee.

- The definition of “roadside” seems to permit development along very minor roads or tracks into “open country”. In some cases this will have an adverse effect on the Dales landscape. We acknowledge that the definition should allow the Planning Committee to exercise judgment based on the specific circumstances of an application, but we believe that a more detailed definition of acceptability, based on experience to date, would be appropriate.
- We are concerned at the potential cumulative impact of barn conversions on the landscape and the attractiveness of villages. A case in point is the village of Thorpe. Five conversion applications have been made in the last year or so and we fear that such development will change the fine character of this location.
- We have always supported the provision of more housing which is affordable or restricted for occupation by local people. Conversion of barns is not cheap, and the resulting dwelling may in some cases be very expensive and beyond the means of “local people” as popularly understood. Many proposals appear to be for quite large properties. We are not convinced that such conversions address the challenge of



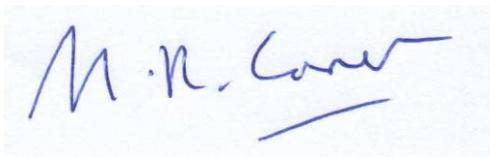
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providing affordable housing.

- If properties fail to attract buyers who are local, we foresee a number of future applications to lift the “local occupancy” restriction. The result would be yet more large houses available to the open market, potentially as second homes.
- We note that a number of applications have been for “either local occupancy or as a holiday let”. In such cases the applicant appears to be unconcerned about whether it becomes a dwelling or holiday accommodation, and simply wants to realise an asset. Such applications do not appear to be addressing any specific housing need.
- Has a monitoring system been established by the Authority to assess the impact of this policy on, for example, second home ownership and affordable housing?

We are aware that the Authority plans at some stage to review the impact of this policy and we would request, given the high number of applications coming forward and our concern regarding some of them, that this review takes place now. We would suggest that the review considers if a more detailed definition of acceptable 'roadside' locations would be appropriate and that a system is established to take into account when considering applications, and to monitor, the cumulative impact of barn conversions on the landscape and on the nature of the housing stock in the National Park.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. R. Corner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Corner, Chairman of Friends of the Dales