

Press Release



Date: 19 March 2019

Charities join forces to urge Council to refuse Dales leisure village

Friends of the Dales and Campaign for National Parks welcome the recommendation, set out in the report to Craven District Council Planning Committee, to refuse the proposed leisure village development at Hellifield. The Council's report clearly states that the proposals are out of scale and would have an unacceptable impact on Hellifield village.

Friends of the Dales and Campaign for National Parks are both opposed to a planning application for development of the Hellifield Flashes. The proposals would see the irreversible destruction of important habitats for nationally rare birds including lapwing, black tailed godwit and widgeon.

The Hellifield Flashes are important natural wetlands just outside the eastern boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, but they are threatened by proposals for an extensive leisure complex including a 100-bed hotel and leisure centre, and up to 300 holiday lodges.

Ann Shadrake, Executive Director, Friends of the Dales said "We urge councillors to note the very robust arguments for refusal which demonstrate that these damaging proposals are completely contrary to the Council's own saved and draft Local Plans, in particular the emerging policy EC4B which identifies the critical importance of the site for biodiversity. We commend the report's detailed rebuttal of the developer's claims about "benefits" to wildlife or the creation of jobs. We fully agree that the protection of Hellifield's environment comes first and we believe that councillors will do the right thing in refusing this application."

Andrew Hall from Campaign for National Parks, said "Important open countryside, right on the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, would be visually damaged by these proposals. Local roads would not cope with the significant increase in traffic. The plans also fail the national criteria for sustainable development.

"At a time when nature is in crisis this kind of development within the setting of the National Park is completely inappropriate. Development of the Flashes will not only undermine the value of an important wildlife site, used by over 150 species of bird including 35 on the 'red list' of endangered or threatened species but also impinge on the beauty and character of the National Park."

For further information contact: Ann Shadrake, Executive Director, Friends of the Dales, on 01756 749400 or email ann.shadrake@friendsofthedales.org.uk

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We are a registered charity (Charity No. 515384) and a Company limited by guarantee without share capital (Company No. 1822908)

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Note to editors:

Friends of the Dales is the working name of the Yorkshire Dales Society, a registered charity (515384) that works to campaign, protect and promote enjoyment of the national park and adjacent areas. We offer a year round programme of events, walks and talks so everyone can enjoy and learn more about this beautiful area and why it needs protection. One of our key projects is the provision of the Sunday Dalesbus service, benefitting residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Campaign for National Parks

Campaign for National Parks is the only national charity dedicated to campaigning to protect and promote all the 13 National Parks of England and Wales.

National Parks are inspiring and breath-taking areas of our country. They are part of our cultural heritage, are important for wildlife, contain beautiful landscapes and benefit the nation. They are living and working landscapes and more than 100 million people visit the Parks in England and Wales each year.

Campaign for National Parks works with a wide variety of people and organisations, representing shared concerns, views and voices. We come together to address issues affecting National Parks and take action to keep these beautiful places safe.

For more information visit www.cnp.org.uk.

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