

Andrew Tait [via email]

Senior Planning Officer

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

6 March 2024

Objection to Planning Application: C/46/290A Mast Middlesmore Pasture Kettlewell

Full planning permission for the installation of a 25m lightweight lattice mast with 2 no. radio antennas, 4 no. 300mm dish, radio equipment housing, an electrical generator with built-in fuel tank and ancillary development within a new compound (Site Ref: 30698300)

Dear Mr Tait

Friends of the Dales wishes to **object** to this application.

We note this is a resubmission of application C/46/290 which we objected to in August 2023 and which was withdrawn by the applicant. It is extremely hard from the documentation provided to identify what if anything is different in this new application.

However, the landowner, the National Trust, has identified that “this proposal appears to have marginally moved the position and increased its height to 25m. There is no explanation for this increase ... and we consider greater visual impacts to arise...”.

This mast will be sited in a highly visible location in open moorland. The plethora of documentation provided by the applicant, on behalf of Shared Rural Network, fails to properly assess the very high visual impact this mast will have on the landscape and scenic beauty of this remote and tranquil part of the national park landscape.

We support the comprehensive objection from the National Trust as landowner, and agree with the concerns they raise, summarised below (*with our additions in italics*)

- noise from a permanent generator impacting on recreational users on PROW in this remote moorland area, detrimental to peace and tranquillity
- insufficient Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as the exact location is not confirmed
- reliance on a reversal of the scheme at year 20, with no guarantees over removal or making good. *Given the applicant states the mast has a lifespan of only twenty years, it seems extraordinary that such a short-term solution is being proposed to the questionable need to provide 4G coverage in this incredibly remote area.*

Continued./...



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- despite this dependence on reversal at year 20 the application is for a permanent, not a temporary structure
- the magnitude of visual change on people using the nearby PROW (viewpoint 6) is described as Low-Negligible, despite this being a highly sensitive landscape. *We note that similar claims of negligible impact, in this case from a Shared Rural Network (SRN) and Emergency Services Network (ESN) mast in the Lake District National Park, have recently been scrutinised by the Planning Inspector. Here the PI determined that the potential impact of visual change on users of recreational route (at Buttermere, a similar area of national and international designation) **would be greater than claimed by the applicant.** For this reason, and the impact on landscape and scenic beauty, the Appeal was dismissed (APP/Q9495/W/23/3334950 – 18 January 2024)*
- significant concerns about the access track

The National Trust also raise concerns about the impact on the land which is within the Upper Wharfedale SSSI.

This is re-iterated in the objection from Natural England, as they consider it will “damage or destroy the interest features for which the Upper Wharfedale SSSI has been notified... (because) the proposal will result in the permanent loss of approximately 138 square metres of calcareous and acid grassland...”. **We support this objection from Natural England.**

We estimate there have been 12 mast applications submitted to YDNPA since July 2022 under the government’s Shared Rural Network scheme. One, S/05/49 at Barbon Low Fell, Casterton, was rightly refused and is currently subject to Appeal. Another three have been withdrawn, possibly awaiting the outcome of that Appeal before re-applying. This new application C/46/290A is a resubmission of one of those withdrawn applications.

Only one of these 12 masts has been approved, at Buckden Rake (C/13/204). The officer’s report clearly indicated the very fine balance between policy objectives for rural connectivity against protecting landscape quality. It is now clear that this mast was part of an intended suite of six masts under Shared Rural Network which would require Line of Sight between them to be operational.

We also note that this mast – C/46/290A at Kettlewell – is shown as part of a related network of masts in another application – C/44/304, Cam Houses – currently under consideration and to which we have also objected. There is reference in those documents to the importance of all masts to have Line of Sight in the sequence to be approved to be operational. However, the reciprocal point is not made in *this* application. We urge members assess each application must separately and make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

We urge national park members to refuse this particular application –C/46/290A - due to the significant impact on the prime purposes of the national park – conservation of landscape quality and recreational use.

Chair, Policy and Planning Committee
On behalf of Friends of the Dales

Friends of the Dales is a working name of the Yorkshire Dales Society which was founded in 1981 and is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Friends of the Dales is free of political and financial affiliations. We work to ensure that the Government, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, and other relevant agencies deliver their obligations to care for the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales, an internationally important area. We do this by considering major planning applications and policy development affecting the Yorkshire Dales and adjacent areas. We offer a year round programme of walks and talks so that everyone can enjoy and learn more about this beautiful area and why it needs protection. We have a membership of around 1,300 individuals, families, businesses and organisations.