

Emma Heron [via email]

Principal Planning Officer

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

16 April 2024

**Objection to Planning Application: R/56/154F, The Moorcock Inn, Garsdale.
Full planning permission for change of use of public house to 1no. dwelling and 2no. B&B letting
rooms, and change of use of Manager's accommodation to licensed tearoom and 1no. self-
contained holiday let including alterations to windows and doors (retrospective)**

Dear Ms Heron,

Friends of the Dales **objects** to this planning application to seek change of use for the Moorcock Inn.

We consider this proposal to be in contravention of several aspects of the Local Plan as well as YDNPA policies and objectives. We are particularly concerned of reports that the applicant has already begun work to alter the pub and remove the exterior inn signage without the necessary planning permission. The documents included in the application are very minimal with no detailed plans, design or heritage statement about what is being proposed for the building and the immediate vicinity.

Impact on Local Community and loss of Community Facility

The Inn has long served the local community and been a welcome refuge to those passing by whether walking on the fells in Mallerstang or over to Dent Dales or using the railway through Garsdale train station. It has also been seen as a community hub which is commented on by the many responses from people living nearby. What was once a thriving Inn has more recently been viewed as one that has not been supported by the owners with frequent closure and erratic hours. The area is popular with visitors and the improvements in public transport through rail and bus, is bringing more people here in holiday lets and day visitors. The Moorcock Inn - which had been previously offering the provision of general refreshments - tea, coffee, cakes, ice cream etc as well as the licensed ones, is ideally placed to thrive and without there is a risk of visits declining. the nearest equivalent facilities are in Hawes, Sedbergh and Kirkby Stephen each of which require an additional journey for those specifically visiting Upper Wensleydale.

We understand that there is a very strong feeling in the local village and the wider area about this proposal and at the time of writing, 38 objections have been submitted, a significant proportion from the local community. The proposal is an unsustainable alternative use of a historic public house and a great loss, not only to the community but to all the walkers, cyclists and tourists who travel to the area and expecting it to be open as a pub.

Continued./...



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It is located on the Pennine Bridleway and given that YDNPA has approved the plan for disused railway line between Garsdale station and Hawes to be turned into a traffic-free multi-user trail the absence of The Moorcock Inn would be a significant detriment to the attractiveness of the new trail.

Against Local Plan Policies

The core policies (CP7 and CP8) of the Richmondshire state that Local Plan support will be given to:

- safeguarding the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services and small scale rural economic development to meet local needs
- the social and economic needs of rural areas lying beyond Spatial Principle SP2 settlements, by encouraging expansion of rural businesses, tourism related initiatives, recreation uses appropriate to a rural location
- supporting development where it would provide community facilities which meet a local need and supports the social and economic regeneration of rural areas.

We believe that this application is contradicting the aspects of the Local Plan shown above. Furthermore, the applicant has not set out the business assessment for the proposed reduced offering as we believe an independent marketing assessment should be provided and a full viability test should have been undertaken to ascertain that the business as a public house is no longer viable. In their absence we have concerns as to the level of commitment to fulfilling even the reduced refreshment offering included.

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.