

Clare Bland [via email]

Planning

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

10 December 2024

**Objection to Planning Application: C/52/38F The Boar's Head, Main Street, Long Preston.
Full planning permission for conversion of the former Boar's Head public house to form three
dwellings; erection of three new dwellings in former car-park and associated parking and
landscaping**

Dear Ms Bland

Friends of the Dales wishes to object to this application. We objected to the previous version of the application C/52/38F. We wish to maintain our objection despite the reduction by the applicant to the number (from three to two) and height of the new build dwellings.

We have three principal concerns – a proposed change of use a community facility [public house] to market value housing, without good justification; the appropriateness of the proposed development; and lack of affordable housing provision.

1. Change of use leading to loss of a community facility

a) Community Assets

The history, including the impact of the pandemic restrictions, is of two thriving public houses in Long Preston - namely The Boar's Head and the Maypole Inn. Both public houses had experienced periods of closure in recent years and therefore they should be registered as Community Assets. Long Preston Parish Council did register both pubs (plus two other buildings) as Community Assets in 2017, but all four registrations expired (after 5 years) in 2022.

Long Preston Parish Council considered renewing all four expired nominations, including The Boar's Head, towards the end of 2023. Unfortunately, Councillors decided only to re-nominate the Maypole Inn [and the Post Office]. It is not clear why this decision to exclude The Boar's Head was taken. Nor is it clear to what extent the community was consulted. Both pubs meet the criteria and the community view is for the ongoing provision of such facilities.

b) Local Plan

C9 of the Local Plan – Existing Community Facilities is relevant here and we strongly believe that the application does not meet this when set against the needs of the village. The population of the village is growing and with recent affordable housing that has meant more families locating there. The village is becoming more thriving – more, not fewer, amenities and community facilities are needed. There is also growth in visitor numbers – whether briefly stopping off, making a day visit or staying over – leading to a likely unmet demand for accommodation, refreshments and facilities.

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c) Lack of adequate independent evidence

There is still no appropriate and proportionate independent evidence. This means there is a lack of appropriate financial, business planning, options appraisals, marketing and community engagement evidence required to support an application to remove the public house. The paper provided does not meet the requirement in C9 as it is not independent and lacks a proper business assessment. Therefore, the aims in the NPPF (2023) to maintain a range of facilities that are vital to the fabric of the rural community are not met at all.

Until the Boar's Head was purchased by a building company (the applicant) it was under previous ownership by a pub company (Punch Taverns). There is a perception in the community that there was a lack of necessary investment, which in other Dales pubs has led to a thriving renewal of trade. Our understanding is that the community feeling is exasperation at the poor condition the pub has been allowed to reduce to, with an understandable wish to see the pub continue as a community facility [even if part of the site were converted for other use].

2. Proposed Development

The five (reduced from six) dwellings proposed are four x 4 bedroom [albeit that one of the 4 bedroom conversions is described as 3 bedroom plus office] and one x 3 bedroom. The proposal is clearly designed to maximise the return from the site by putting in dwellings with multiple bedrooms. Unfortunately, this design leaves no room for any gardens or other open space. The areas to front and back will be dominated by the main road, the access road and parking areas. The result will be a congested site, with only a single lane access on to the busy A65 [raising safety concerns].

Only two car parking spaces have been provided per dwelling, which seems inadequate for houses of this size. This will lead to pressure on the already limited parking in the village. If the proposal was for a mixed development of a community facility and smaller dwellings, then the plans could potentially accommodate the much-needed open space and gardens that are vitally important for physical and mental health of the new residents.

3. Affordable Housing

The housing needs for this part of the national park has been subject to detailed consultation by the Authority leading to the designation of several pieces of land within the village for housing.

However, houses of the size proposed in this plan form a very difficult segment of the housing market. In recent years properties of this size in the village have either failed to sell or have only sold when the local occupancy requirement is removed.

To meet C1 of the Local Plan the houses will have to be offered for Local Occupancy. The most needed type of housing is smaller affordable dwellings. In choosing to reduce the proposal from six to five houses the applicant has now avoided the requirement in the Local Plan to pay a commuted sum in lieu of the delivery of the relevant proportion of affordable housing. This is not at all in the interest of what is needed in this community and the Yorkshire Dales National Park generally.

Yours sincerely

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.