


From: Planning
Subject: FW: HARP Planning Application 3/2021/0660

From: [REDACTED] **Sent:** Sunday, March 5, 2023 9:54 AM
To: **Subject:** HARP Planning Application 3/2021/0660


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Dear [REDACTED]

I have viewed the Public Document Pack dated 2nd March 2023 relating to the above planning application, and wanted to bring your attention to my comments submitted via the RVBC website 16th Feb 2023.

Comments: I do not believe that the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework have been complied with for this application in that:

When considering applications for development within National Parks, the broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major developments other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

I believe the language adopted throughout this process does not suggest that an assumption of refusal position has been adopted and that exceptional circumstances or overwhelming public interest have been proven. I believe it should be remembered that the application is for a major development in the Forest of Bowland AONB, and it is the exceptional circumstances and public interest for this to take place, and not the objectives of the overall scheme, for which there will always be alternatives, that needs to be considered.

a) The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it or refusing it on the local economy;

The impact on the local economy has not been fully assessed as there has been a lack of consultation and information gathering. Farming, hospitality, recreation and tourism are key to the economic security of people in the locality and all will be severely impacted.

b) The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way;

The alternatives to this scheme and the rationale for selecting this option have never been published in full or subject to independent scrutiny.

c) Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

This effect has not been fully assessed and will have huge detrimental effect on the environment for which there is very little effective mitigation. The landscape will be altered irrevocably by the destruction of ancient tree, hedgerows, wild life habitat and stone walls. Promised reinstatement does not moderate this

damage. Enjoyment of this part of the AONB is a key recreational resource for both local people and visitors and is acknowledged as being key to well-being and mental health.

In my opinion the papers published 2nd of March do not address these issues. Furthermore, I believe the advice being given to councillors severely plays down the impact of the application in its current form on the AONB as illustrated by these contrasting assessments.

Natural England 27th May 2022

“We note that no mitigation is proposed for any of the compounds or the highway works as they are considered 'temporary'. We understand that the compounds (and some of the highway works) will be removed and land reinstated once works are complete. In that sense they are 'temporary'. However, the works would be undertaken for a >10-year period which is a long-term presence within the AONB with this part of the designated area severely hindered, if not totally prevented, from delivering for the AONB's statutory purpose for that period.”

RVBC Director of Economic Development and Planning Director Recommendation

Public Document Pack 2nd Mar 2023 paragraph 5.17

“To conclude regarding the need for the development it is considered that therefore there is an essential need for this proposed development to take place within the AONB. The development is acknowledged to be in the wider public interest and whilst there will be some limited short term environmental and visual impacts upon the character and appearance of the AONB these will be only temporary rather than permanent in their nature.”

Natural England also describe this application as:

“a major infrastructure project, comparable in terms of its construction phase size, duration and its effects, to a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. The scheme is proposed for within an AONB, for which the landscape quality is the equivalent of a National Park with regard to both its designated status and its protection under national planning policy. In this context Natural England is concerned about how the scheme has been planned, particularly in relation to the siting of individual components of the pre-operational construction phase.”

In the light of these comments the onus for making a planning decision/s should not be on the local authority but instead should be referred to the Secretary of State.

Even at this late hour, I would appeal to you to change your recommendation and for the decision to be deferred and this matter referred to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Best regards

