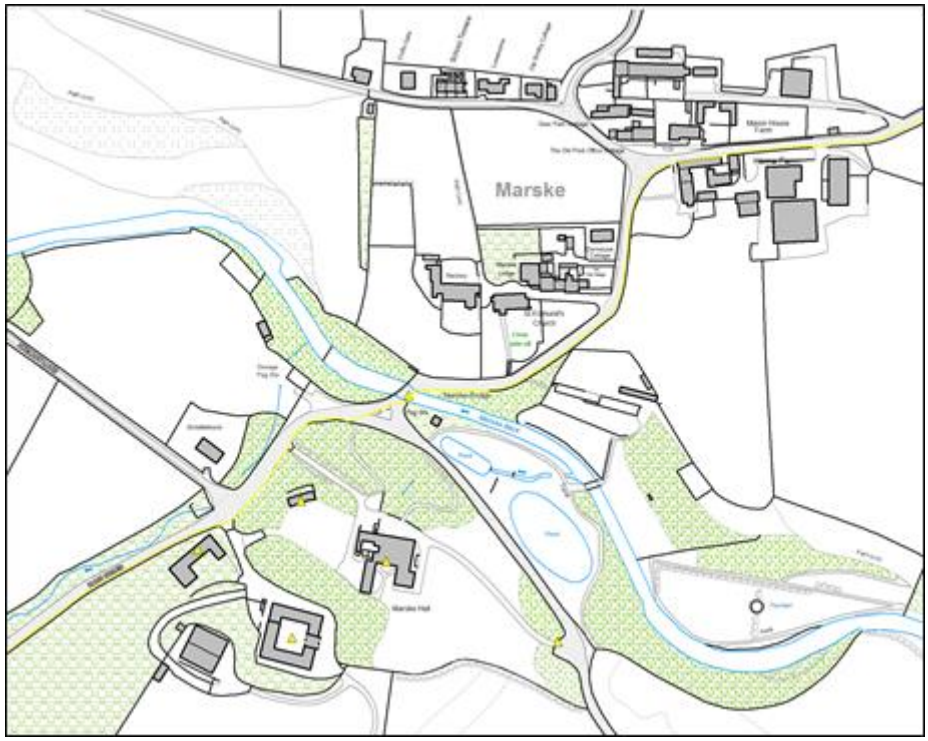
ITEM 1

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Committee:	Planning	**Parish:**	Marske
Date:	9th February 2021	**Officer:**	Michelle Clowes
Applicant:	Mr I Morton	**Application No:**	R/31/22R
Site Address:	Marske Hall and the Sawmill, Marske		
Proposal:	Full planning permission for conversion of Marske Hall from 10 open market apartments to an aparthotel and conversion of basement to associated facilities which include gym, sauna, laundry, retail space, cellar bar and tasting rooms; conversion and extension of the kennels to an events space; conversion of the Sawmill to an events space; construction of outbuilding to house electricity sub-station and provision of car parking areas		



REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

1. This application is reported to Committee as in the opinion of the Head of Development Management it is in the best interests of the National Park Authority that the application is considered by the Committee.

APPLICATION SITE

2. Markse Hall is a Grade II* listed former country house with extensive formal landscaped gardens and associated outbuildings including the former Sawmill and Kennel building, both of which are Grade II listed in their own right. The site forms part of the village of Marske and it falls within the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, although the majority of the village lies in the Richmondshire District Council administrative area. Marske Hall lies adjacent to the village Conservation Area and is on the route of the long distance Coast to Coast walk.

PROPOSAL

3. Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of Marske Hall from 10 open market apartments to an 'aparthotel' and conversion of basement to associated facilities which include gym, sauna, laundry, retail space, cellar bar and tasting rooms; the conversion and extension of the Kennels to an events space; conversion of the Sawmill to an events space; the construction of an outbuilding to house an electricity sub-station and the provision of car parking areas.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4. There are a number of previous decisions that are relevant to the application site;

Marske Hall

R/31/106A/LB Listed building consent for conversion of sawmill buildings to provide 2 No. three bedroomed, holiday accommodation units with associated parking and landscaping. Withdrawn 2016.

R/31/22K/LB Listed building consent for addition of first floor extension over garages 6 & 7 to form storage space. Invalid 1995.

R/31/22L Listed building consent for works to create room above existing double garage. Refused 1995.

R/31/22M Full planning permission for conversion of outbuilding to form double garage and study/storeroom above. Conditional approval 1996.

R/31/22N - Listed building consent for works including part demolition to effect conversion of out building to form double garage with study/store above. Conditional approval 1996.

R/31/22P - Full planning permission for conversion of Marske Hall from 10 existing open market apartments to 10 open market/holiday lets, plus 10 new holiday lets; conversion of basement to associated facilities; conversion and extension of the kennels to form café;

use of existing garden building as electricity sub-station and conversion of The Sawmill to an events venue. Withdrawn 2020.

R/31/22Q/LB - Listed building consent for conversion of Marske Hall from 10 existing open market apartments to 10 open market/holiday lets, plus 10 new holiday lets; conversion of basement to associated facilities; conversion and extension of the kennels to form café; use of existing garden building as electricity sub-station and conversion of The Sawmill to an events venue. Withdrawn 2020.

R/31/22S/LB - Listed building consent for conversion of Marske Hall from 10 open market apartments to an aparthotel and conversion of basement to associated facilities which include gym, sauna, laundry, retail space, cellar bar and tasting rooms; conversion and extension of the kennels to an events space; conversion of the Sawmill to an events space; construction of outbuilding to house electricity sub-station and provision of car parking areas. Pending consideration.

The Sawmill

R/31/106B - Full planning permission for conversion of sawmill buildings to provide 2 No. 3 bedroomed dwellings or holiday let units with associated parking and landscaping. Approved subject to a S106 agreement 2016.

R/31/106C/LB - Listed building consent for conversion of sawmill buildings to provide 2 No. 3 bedroomed local occupancy dwellings or holiday let units with associated parking and landscaping. Conditional approval 2016.

Marske Stables

Applications not related to the application site but that are of relevance as they relate to Marske Stables, an adjacent building within the applicants ownership include;

R/31/23F - Full planning permission for conversion of stables to 9 units for either residential or holiday let accommodation and the retention of 1 existing open market dwelling. Approved subject to S106 agreement 2017.

R/31/23G/LB - Listed building consent for conversion of stables to 9 units for either residential or holiday let accommodation and the retention of 1 existing open market dwelling. Conditional approval 2017.

CONSULTATIONS

5. The comments of statutory and non-statutory consultees are summarized below (full comments available on Members extranet or YDNPA website) :

NYCC Highway Authority – Objects on the grounds of a lack of visibility from the access, the interference of the access with the free flow of traffic and insufficient car parking.

North Yorkshire Building Control – No comments received.

Yorkshire Water – Makes no observations.

Fire & Rescue Service – No objection.

CEHO Richmondshire DC - Objects

Marske & New Forest PC – Raises concerns with regard to the overdevelopment of the site resulting in overlooking/lack of privacy; highway safety and traffic and car parking issues; noise; impact on the listed buildings and conservation area; layout and density of building; design appearance and materials, government policy; disabled persons access; proposals in the development plan; previous planning decisions; nature conservation; public rights of way; flooding and pollution; prevention of crime and disorder and precent for further inappropriate development.

Trees & Woodlands - TBC

Wildlife Conservation Officer – Objects on the lack of information to accurately determine the presence of bats, a mitigation scheme or biodiversity plan.

Police – Makes no comments.

Ward Member – No comments received.

PUBLIC RESPONSES

6. There have been 20 letters of support from 18 individuals citing the following reasons:

   - The restoration and re - use of Marske Hall and its associated buildings are welcomed.
   - The event venues could provide an important facility for local residents and visitors.
   - It will provide employment opportunities for local people and benefit the area.
   - A country hotel and leisure facilities will provide high quality accommodation.
   - The hall, outbuildings and gardens need to be used and enjoyed.
   - The proposals are befitting of a historic house.
   - The scheme would be well managed.
   - There is a shortage of high - quality accommodation in Swaledale.
   - The development would help to serve the increased demand for staycations.

7. There have been 4 letters raising concerns about the proposal but without formally objecting to the proposal. The concerns are that the proposal amounts to the overdevelopment of the site with other concerns relating to traffic, highway safety and noise. Letters include responses from the Friends of the Dales, The Yorkshire Gardens Trust, CPRE and a member of the public.

8. There have been 103 letters received raising objections from 62 individuals (i.e. multiple objections from the same people). The objections include:

   - Marske Hall should be developed for homes for young families to rejuvenate the community.
   - The transport assessment and noise assessment are inadequate
   - The number of vehicles and car parking spaces are underestimated and there is not enough car parking proposed, leading to parking around the village on accesses and verges.
   - Cattle reside in nearby buildings which can be dangerous if spooked by loud noise.
   - A farm labourer may lose his job and home if farming activities are affected.
   - 24 hour farm access is required for calving, lambing and general care of animals as well as emergency visits by vets.
   - Trees should not be felled for the purpose of a business development. Government stewardships are followed by farms to support the environment and wildlife habitation, why should this proposal be any different?

- Removing walls and trees to widen accesses for vehicles will make it difficult to herd cattle and sheep along the right of way to the farm buildings. This is likely to produce conflict between the farm and vehicles visiting the site.
- The proposal would exert a detrimental impact on the adjacent farm through a conflict of traffic with large, heavy farm machines and vehicles.
- The local farmer owns the shooting rights for Kennels Wood where the applicant is proposing to make a car park. If this car park is allowed it will take away the natural vegetation and ground cover for nesting birds and pheasants.
- Marske is a farming village where there is little noise from 8pm onwards.
- The proposal for a wedding venue will generate night - time traffic noise, door slamming and shouting creating noise nuisance.
- The villager's Hands On Sound test shows they will hear breakout noise.
- Adding 20 holiday lets is disproportionate to the village. There should be more accommodation for permanent residents.
- The proposal does not provide any services that would benefit the village.
- There will be a significant increase in traffic on the local single-track roads which do not have pavements. Insufficient visibility from the existing accesses.
- The Events Management Plan is incomplete and not thoroughly thought out.
- A local resident tried to purchase the Sawmill at the asking price to use as a single dwelling but their offer was never progressed. They took advice from a building quantity surveyor and building costs were proposed that were well within the projected valuation of the completed property.
- A local resident has conducted a development appraisal which suggests a residual valuation (i.e. the valuation of the property as it stands now with the benefit of the existing planning consent) is in the region of £200,000 - £250,000. For the development to be unviable the residual value would have to be below zero or possibly just above when it is not near this figure.
- Wedding visitors (single overnight stays) will not contribute to the local economy in terms of local spends in the same way that holiday accommodation available for 1 - 2 week stays would i.e. visitors spending in local shops, cafes and other businesses.
- The proposal could lead to a future need for a marquee, increasing visitors and without sound proofing.
- The Sawmill is a listed building and can't be sufficiently attenuated to prevent noise from escaping from within.
- There is already a wedding venue in the vicinity of the site at Telfit Farm.
- The felling of trees will amplify noise around the site and beyond.
- There has been no attempt to understand the character and capacity of the village with a proposal that is better suited to a large town or city.
- There would be a detrimental impact on the occupant of Scriddlehurst.
- The peace and tranquility of the village would be eroded forever.
- Pressures on foul sewerage and increased surface water run - off.
- Detrimental impact on the dark skies of the national park.
- It will be impossible to control guests irrespective of the management plan.
- The Stables are already being converted to holiday apartments without an events venue so this type of development must be viable without a wedding venue.
- Local wildlife will be adversely affected.

ASSESSMENT

9. **Key Issues:**
   - The principle of development

- Scale & Design
- Impact on the Significance of the Listed Building
- Impact on Amenity of Neighbours
- Impact on Highway Safety
- Impact on the setting of the Conservation Area
- Impact on the Dark Skies of the National Park
- Impact on Trees
- Impact on Protected Species
- Biodiversity Enhancement
- Viability

Principle of Development

10. Planning permission is sought for the conversion of a number of the Markse Hall buildings to form high – end accommodation and events venue site. Marske Hall would be converted from 10 open market dwellings to 20 self – contained flats/studios that would operate on the basis of an aparthotel i.e. serviced accommodation for short – term stays. The basement would provide associated facilities including housekeeping accommodation, a small sauna and spa area, a cellar bar and wine tasting rooms. Simultaneously, permission is requested for the conversion of the former Sawmill and detached Kennel building (referred to as the doghouse in the application documents) into events venues. The Sawmill would be used to host weddings for approximately 70 people whilst the Kennel building would be used for smaller scale functions (although this does not rule out smaller scale weddings). A counterpart application for listed building consent (R/31/22S/LB) is currently pending consideration and is a separate agenda item.

11. Objective A6 of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan (2019 – 2024) seeks to help local people to restore, repair and where possible bring back into use, nationally important historical sites, buildings and structures so that less than 4% of scheduled monuments and listed buildings are considered "at risk" by 2024. The Sawmill has been identified by the Authority as a "listed building at risk" whilst the Kennel building is considered to be vulnerable.

12. The Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 - 2030) aims to deliver sustainable development in the National Park context. It aims to achieve the conservation and enhancement of traditional buildings (heritage assets) by allowing them to be adapted or converted to new uses, providing the building and its landscape has the capacity to absorb them.

13. Policy L1 considers development affecting heritage assets. Traditional buildings may be designated as Listed Buildings or are considered to be 'heritage assets' despite not being designated.

14. Policy L2 allows traditional buildings to be changed to residential and employment uses in certain locations (in existing settlements, building groups, or suitable roadside locations). Intensive uses will not be appropriate in buildings that are isolated in the landscape and a change of use only allowed in isolated buildings, where there would be no material alteration to the exterior of the building or its surroundings.

15. Policy L3 considers the details of the conversion works. Proposals will not be allowed where they undermine the architectural and historic character of the traditional building and its

landscape setting. The building must have the physical capacity to accommodate the new use without significant extension or alteration or requiring new ancillary buildings.

16. A proposal to convert a traditional building to a new use must satisfy the requirements of all three policies.

17. As the buildings in question were all constructed prior to the 20th century and have significant historical and architectural merit as grade II or II* listed buildings, they are without question, traditional buildings for the purposes of policy L2. The Hall and Kennel building are served by the unsealed track that leads from the Hard Stiles road. The Sawmill is served by a separate access track and lies in close proximity to the main road. As such, the buildings would meet the locational criteria of policy L2 of the adopted Local Plan (2015 – 2030). The use and occupancy of the Hall as an aparthotel or short – term holiday accommodation would need to be secured by a S106 legal agreement prior to the granting of any planning permission and the applicant has been made aware of this requirement (policy L2).

18. The proposed development would provide high quality accommodation to serve visitors needs for overnight and longer – term stays within the National Park. This is welcomed and supported in principle as it has the potential to boost the local economy through the provision of construction and more long – term hospitality and maintenance jobs. The support of "Welcome to Yorkshire" for the proposal is also noted. It is recognised that people staying in the accommodation are likely to spend money at local tourist attractions and businesses such as pubs and cafes within the National Park and the wider Richmondshire area. Policy T4 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to support development that provides facilities or services that directly help visitors to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park. The cultural heritage of the National Park is a special quality and the conversion of the Hall into accommodation that would allow visitors to enjoy the historic building and its grounds as well as the other special qualities of the National Park are recognised.

Scale and Design

19. The Marske Hall estate is a real gem in the National Park, not only in terms of its historical value but also its intrinsic landscape beauty and tranquil nature. The applicant's proposal seeks to bring the majority of the estate back under 1 ownership including all of the buildings the subject of this application, plus the former Stable Block. This is considered desirable for the long – term management and care of the listed buildings and their attractive grounds. The key question for Members, is whether the overall scale of development is acceptable when taking into account all of the individual elements of the proposal that have inter – related impacts.

20. The application proposes the use of the Hall for short stay serviced self – catering accommodation and the provision of 2 events venues, 1 of which has been specifically identified as a wedding venue. The applicant has advised that the events venues are required to support the use of the accommodation, particularly during the quieter winter months. All of the proposed uses could be independently occupied. If all of the uses at this site were at full capacity, for example a 70 person wedding, a 30 person conference and every bed in the accommodation taken, this would amount to circa 147 visitors on the site each day, excluding any staff to service the apartments, host the events or maintain the grounds. It is also proposed to utilise the gardens and woods for activities such as archery, bowls and croquet. Whilst the applicant suggests that the majority of wedding guests would stay in the on – site accommodation, this cannot be guaranteed. The applicant also wishes it to be available to visitors for other short – term holidays. As the proposed accommodation offer is suggested

to be very high quality, it is not unreasonable to foresee that not all guests to a wedding at the Sawmill would want or be able to afford to stay at Marske Hall once converted. Instead they could choose to stay at other providers locally and travel independently to the site. The independent occupation of the uses across the site would therefore result in a significant increase in activity over and above what the current use of the site as 10 apartments would generate, both in terms of the number of people and also vehicle movements. This would undoubtedly change the character of the estate and also the wider village of Marske which the estate is part of, an issue recognised by the Parish Council, Friends of the Dales, CPRE and The Yorkshire Gardens Trust in their consultation responses.

Marske Hall

21. As a former country house, Marske Hall has a commanding presence over its designed estate. It was constructed from local rubble stone with ashlar dressings under a traditional stone slate roof. It has 16th and 17th century origins but was extensively remodelled and extended in 1730 and it retains much of its appearance externally from that time in the form of a classically Georgian composition. The Hall was again remodelled internally and converted from a single dwelling to apartments in the mid 20th century through the introduction of partition walls and interventions in the historic fabric. Currently only 1 of the 10 apartments are occupied by a live – in caretaker.

22. The proposal seeks to further remodel the interior to form more apartments and studio suites increasing the number of units to 20. These alterations generally work with the listed building and would largely be sensitive to any particular architectural or historic features of the building. The proposed units can all be accommodated without significant alteration or extension and to this extent, the conversion of the Hall to holiday lets would make a good use of the building that is generally compatible with its character.

The Sawmill

23. The Sawmill is a 19th century U – shaped building of rubble stone, under a stone slate roof that surrounds a small courtyard. The Sawmill has been identified as a listed building "at risk" due to its current dilapidated condition. Building conservation best practice advocates that the best way to conserve a listed building is to find a use that will help to secure its long – term future and maintenance. However, that use must be compatible with the character and layout of the historic building in order to comply with policies L1, L2 and L3 of the adopted Local Plan.

24. The proposal seeks to convert the Sawmill into an events venue that would operate 7 days per week, all year round. Weddings are likely to be the most typical events held at the Sawmill which would be furnished with a bar and kitchen area, lounge, toilets and open plan "L" shaped function room. To facilitate this open plan area, 2 existing internal dividing walls would be removed. The Senior Listed Buildings Officer has objected to this alteration on the grounds that the loss of the original fabric would be harmful to the listed building by creating a false impression of the original layout and use of the building. The original saw – pit would however be covered over with a glazed floor so that it can be easily interpreted.

25. Although the external walls are generally in sound condition, the roof has suffered from water ingress leading to a significant deterioration of the internal roof structure. The roof would need to be replaced as part of any conversion works and although this could potentially be supported in principle, no details for the proposed new roof construction have been provided. It is therefore difficult to understand and make an assessment of the impact that the new works

would have on the historic fabric and character of the building at this stage, contrary to the requirements of policy L3 of the Local Plan.

The Kennel Building

26. The single storey Kennel building also dates from the early 19th century and is constructed of rubble stone with ashlar dressings and a hipped stone slate roof in a neo – classical style of architecture. It has an unusual curved plan form, slightly elevated approximately 40m to the north – west and above the level of the Hall, separated from it by a lawn and set against a backdrop of trees. The building retains a large amount of original fabric and is currently used for low – key storage and as an animal shelter.

27. It is proposed to convert the Kennel building into an event space, smaller in scale to that of the Sawmill. However, to facilitate this use it is proposed to erect a large single storey extension between the rear elevation of the building and the existing estate wall that together enclose a small yard area. The proposed extension would in effect be created from the provision of a predominantly glazed roof between the Kennel building and the adjacent boundary wall. Policy L3 requires heritage assets to be capable of conversion without significant extension or alteration. The existing building is large enough to accommodate a small events space (akin to a large meeting room) with associated toilet and basic kitchen facilities without extension but that is not the preferred option of the applicant. Concerns were raised regarding the extent of the extension which originally ran the full length of the building and nearly doubled the size of the building. The applicant was asked to reduce the structure and whilst the amended plans show a reduced footprint, this is minimal in nature with only a small set back of the extension behind the original building. The western elevation of the new extension would also cut across a large existing opening in the original rear wall of the kennel building, diluting the readability and historic layout of the original structure. This is unnecessary and the wall could easily be set back further, to fully accommodate the opening, without significantly affecting the internal space of the new extension. If these changes were made, it is considered that the extension could be supported despite the policy objection given that the structure would be obviously modern in nature. It would also be located in a discreet location between the rear of the building and an existing boundary wall, that would mean that only part of the structure would ever be seen in public views. There are concerns however about the potential for noise dispersal from the glazed structure (see amenity section below).

28. The proposals include a large terrace to the front elevation of the Kennel building which would be utilised for outdoor seating. Whilst this may be desirable for users of the building it is not necessary for the events space that this proposal would create. The provision of a formal terrace would affect the character of the Kennels as a functional outbuilding and would become cluttered with outdoor furniture including tables, chairs and parasols. Unusually for kennels, this building was designed to be seen from the Hall and has a more grand appearance that you would usually expect for such a building. The terrace would serve to disrupt this visual link between the two buildings to the detriment of the setting of the listed buildings. At present the proposals are considered harmful to the character of the building and contrary to policy L3 of the adopted Local Plan (2015 – 2030).

Impact on the Significance of the Listed Building

29. As discussed above, the Marske Hall estate is special and potentially unique within the National Park, consisting of several historic buildings ranging in importance from grade II to II* listed buildings. The hall stands in extensive landscaped grounds, developed from at least the 16th century, with important phases of development in the 18th and 19th centuries illustrating the life, social activity and aspirations of a greater gentry house belonging to the

Hutton family. The 18th century landscape interventions are an early example of an intentionally 'picturesque' composition. Further changes in the 19th century included introducing planting with important specimen trees to the north of the Hall, creating ornamental gardens around the beck, constructing new ancillary buildings (the Kennels and Sawmill) and bringing these elements together through sensitive landscaping. Although the park is not formally registered, it is a non-designated heritage asset and makes an important contribution to the setting of the hall.

30. The proposed development gives rise for the need for a significant amount of car parking. 75 spaces are provided on the amended plans, however the Highway Authority states that at least 89 are required. Historic England has raised concerns that the proposal adds pressure onto a landscape with very limited capacity to accommodate this amount of car parking without seriously impacting on the significance of the historic assets. The site is extremely constrained due to the situation of the listed buildings, the large mature specimen trees and designed grounds or the natural topography which is steeply sloping in parts. Officers spent a considerable amount of time at the site visit looking at potential alternatives and the Senior Listed Buildings Officer also drafted a sketch plan of where it was thought car parking might be positioned to limit the harm on the setting of the listed buildings. Unfortunately, some of the locations proposed then had implications on the mature trees and specimens that from part of the designed landscape that in itself has historical significance. There is therefore nowhere obvious that car parking can be accommodated discreetly. The proposal tries to disperse the car parking around the site which unfortunately, spreads the impact of the proposal across the designed landscape, making it more harmful than if it were located in one area.

31. Historic England and the Senior Listed Buildings Officer are particularly concerned about the proposal for 12 spaces in a v – shape along 2 edges of the rising lawned area between the Hall and the Kennels, along with 3 spaces to the left – hand side of the Kennel building itself. These spaces will have a considerable visual impact on the views between the Kennels and the Hall, introducing a continuous visual barrier which will obstruct the ability to appreciate the Kennel building when approaching the site, as well as the intended designed visual relationship between the Hall and the outbuilding. The presence of parked cars, especially the row closest to the kennel building, would dominate the setting of the buildings due to its proximity to the buildings and the rising topography. The plans also show the removal of the rounded curb at the bottom of the lawned area which is a feature shown on all the historic maps.

32. It is considered that the amount of car parking provided, which falls short of the requirements of the Highway Authority, already exceeds what the site can take and in doing so, compromises the significance of the historic assets. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Any impact or loss of significance should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 194). The justification for the car parking is driven solely by the type of use proposed, particularly the desire for 2 events venues. As there is little opportunity to provide car parking elsewhere within the site, and little that can be done to mitigate or reduce the impact of the car parking, it is considered that the proposed use, by virtue of the level of car parking it generates, would result in significant harm to the setting of the listed buildings. Given the lack of justification and the potential for less harmful, alternative uses, the proposal cannot be said to meet the requirements of paragraphs 193 and 194 of the NPPF.

33. In terms of the impact on the significance of the listed buildings themselves, this is largely assessed under the counterpart LBC application. However, there is insufficient information with regard to the treatment of the buildings to determine the impact of the proposals on the various listed buildings. For example, no information has been provided relating to the replacement Sawmill roof or the treatment of internal walls and replacement ceilings and floors and some of the identified works such as the extension to the Kennel Building and the removal of internal walls to the Sawmill are considered to be unjustified and harmful to the listed building. At this stage, the harm caused could not be overridden by the benefit of bringing the buildings back into use and the proposals would be contrary to policy L1 and the NPPF.

Impact on the Amenity of Neighbours

34. The NPPF at paragraph 180 is clear that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area, to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so proposals should mitigate and reduce to a minimum, potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life; identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.

35. A management plan has been issued with the planning documents which sets out the criteria on which the serviced accommodation and events venues would operate. Much of this information appears to be copied from a tenancy style agreement (for example referring to occupants not having duplicate keys cut) that would be of benefit to the applicant's company rather than address the measures that would be put into place to ensure that the accommodation can be effectively operated and supervised without detriment to any nearby residents. For example it suggests that, "a member of the team will be on call 24 hours a day to deal with any reported emergency/noise/nuisance issues." Unfortunately, this does not provide active management of the site or suggest that someone available locally or at the site, would be available at any time to resolve issues. Whilst a good basis to start from it is considered that the management plan would need to be re – written and refined in a more succinct and focused way to give the Authority confidence that the estate and its multiple uses, could be effectively managed and supervised. It would also need to be built into the S106 process previously mentioned above.

36. Of particular concern is the proposal for the wedding venue in the former Sawmill building. The supporting documentation explains that the venue would mostly operate Thursday – Sunday but it would be available 7 days per week from 9am until midnight for 12 months of the year. Weddings for most people are significant events where they can celebrate with their family and friends (setting aside current Covid restrictions). They can generate significant movements both before, during and after the event in terms of setting the venue with furniture, props and flowers, people coming and going throughout the day (e.g. new evening guests arriving after the wedding breakfast) and staff clearing up at the end of the day. Whilst the management plan indicates that the bar would close at 11.30pm and wedding receptions would end at midnight, the reality is that activities would go on beyond 12am. Staff would be required to clear up and guests would say their goodbyes and make their way to their cars or accommodation.

37. Following concerns raised by the Environmental Health Officer about the acceptability of the proposal, a Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted to accompany the application. The report concludes that, provided mitigation measures are followed, namely the upgrading of the Sawmill roof and the installation of a zonal PA system with a music limiting device, there

would be no adverse impact at the nearest noise sensitive receptor of Scriddlehurst, a dwelling which lies just 45m to the north of the Sawmill, due to any noise emission from both the Sawmill and Kennel buildings. Further noise control measures are deemed necessary and are included in the Noise Management Plan, particularly the need to keep doors and windows closed, the provision of an alternative ventilation system for hot days and mechanical door closers.

38. A critical element in terms of noise acceptability is the character and nature of an area. Marske is a small, quiet, rural village. It is essentially located in a bowl, with the majority of the village properties on the northern side and the Marske Hall Estate on the southern side. Its tranquillity at night means that the introduction of an events venue will produce distinctive, attention drawing noise completely out of character for the area, which is likely to cause an adverse impact, even at a low sound level. Local residents concerned about this implication of the proposals conducted their own "sound test" which although not scientific, did demonstrate how noise could travel from the site through to the rest of the Village. The Environmental Health Officer agrees that this is likely and that noise from persons leaving the premises, raised voices, engine noise, car doors slamming, engines left running, traffic noise and fireworks cannot be controlled by legislation. Given the nature of the proposed events it is not unlikely that such noises could continue until beyond midnight, every night of the week.

39. Despite this the Noise Assessment predicts patron noise to be below the recommended dB standard. However, the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) considers that it is inappropriate to apply this standard in this context as it is intended for noise sources without a specific character, such as traffic noise which is often a continuous sound that can blend into the background. The EHO advises that occupants are usually more tolerant of noise without a specific character than, for example, that from neighbours which can trigger complex emotional reactions due to its potentially intermittent and unregulated nature. Often when attending a wedding the music will be loud and guests will raise their voices to be heard when talking. They may also be more inclined to shout or sing when they are enjoying themselves, particularly if inebriated. There is therefore real potential for significant noise and disturbance to the occupant of Scriddlehurst in particular, but also the wider village from amplified music and guests leaving the venue in the early hours of the morning. The Environmental Health Officer has helpfully explained that the quantitative noise statistics and the predicted change in noise level provided in the report, provides an initial estimate of a noise impact. However, this does not always reflect the actual disturbance which people feel, that is primarily subjective. Noise from music, regardless of its decibel level, if audible, is widely recognised as unacceptable and can cause sleep disturbance, not because of its decibel level but simply due to its detection. The proposed wedding venue use is therefore likely to have a significantly detrimental impact on the quality of life experienced by the occupants of Scriddlehurst but also other residents living elsewhere in the village.

40. The Noise Assessment's reliance on measures such as keeping windows and doors closed is also considered to be fundamentally flawed for both the venue and Scriddlehurst. The venue cannot prevent people from coming and going as it is likely to breach health and safety legislation and each time the door opens there would be a blast of loud music and/or voices. No information has been provided for the provision of a mechanical ventilation system to operate in lieu of windows being kept closed. On hot days some form of ventilation will be required. Likewise, it is wholly unreasonable to expect the occupant of Scriddlehurst to keep their windows closed during wedding events, when events could take place every day of the year. In addition, although the applicant's management plan indicates that staff would

supervise wedding guests and prevent them from becoming a nuisance, this would be very difficult to enforce, particularly at a special celebratory event.

41. A further issue that the noise assessment does not (and would not be expected to) consider is the impact of the wedding venue on farm animals belonging to the neighbouring farm. An agricultural building is located 25m to the south of the Sawmill where different animals (cows and sheep) are kept at certain times of the year and also transported along the track that runs to the side of the proposed wedding venue. The farmer has suggested that cattle can become dangerous when spooked by loud noise. It is also understood that noise, depending on whether it is continuous or intermittent can affect the production parameters of the animals. Wedding guests crossing the access track to reach the Sawmill at times when animals are being moved between the land and buildings could pose a threat to visitors of the site. The farmer considers that if allowed, the proposal would have significant impacts on the way they are able to farm, including job losses if they have to give up animals, land or buildings as a result.

42. As discussed above Marske is known and prized for its beauty and tranquillity experienced by local residents but also local visitors and those that are more transient undertaking the Coast to Coast walk that runs through the village. The level of activity that the proposed development would generate in addition to the specific nature of some of the activities, would therefore diminish one of the special qualities of the area and the National Park and would be wholly unacceptable in terms of its impact on the amenity of the village. The development is considered to be contrary to polices SP2 and SP4 of the adopted Local Plan and paragraph 180 of the NPPF.

Impact on Highway Safety

43. The Marske Hall estate benefits from 3 access points; 1 off Cat Bank which is the grand formal entrance to the Hall; 1 off Hard Stiles serving the rear of the Hall and 1 access off Hard Stiles, predominantly serving the Sawmill and Stables but also linking through to the Hall. The application proposes to utilise the 2 accesses off Hard Stiles with an “in” and “out” arrangement. Given the scale of development proposed and the rural location of the site, a Transport Assessment (TA) was requested by the Highway Authority to demonstrate the impact of the proposals on the highway network. A TA was subsequently provided by the applicant.

Highway Network

44. The site is accessed via small, narrow local roads from the main A6108 that connects Leyburn to Richmond. The majority of visitors to this site will travel from this main A road, having to negotiate the listed Downholme Bridge and the section of road that is subject to subsidence. The TA relies on the assumption that the majority of wedding guests will be staying in the accommodation on site. However, this cannot be enforced and wedding guests will be free to stay where they choose. You may therefore realistically have a scenario where only a small number of wedding guests stay “on site” with the rest travelling in from other accommodation providers. This would free up the accommodation on site to be used by general holidaymakers. In this situation, you could have a significant number of people arriving and departing the site each day.

45. The TA tries to suggest that the level of traffic to and from the site would be insignificant when compared to the use of the Hall as a visitor attraction (similar to a National Trust property) which it is said could bring in between 150 - 200,000 visitors each year in 87,000 vehicles. This is a red herring as the impact of the development on traffic flows should be based on a

comparison with the current use of the site and not a speculated use that does not have planning permission and would be highly unlikely to be granted in this location. Notwithstanding this, based on the worst case scenario figures for the proposed uses, the Highway Authority are not concerned about the capacity of the local highway network and the traffic flows in terms of numbers only, to and from the site.

Vehicular Entrance

46. The proposed "in" access to the site is located close to the blind bend where Hard Stiles meets Cat Bank. It is very easy to "overshoot" the access when travelling via Cat Bank, even when the driver knows to expect an access close to the bend in the road. Whilst the TA shows that a driver making a left turn into the site would have sufficient forward visibility of the turning vehicle, this does not cover the situation when a driver overshoots the entrance and makes a decision to reverse back. This situation is likely to be common for first time visitors to the site. Given that people attending a wedding will be required to meet at the site at a certain time, this increases the opportunity for accidents in contrast to the use of the site for holiday accommodation only, where guests are likely to stagger their arrival times. Although the visibility of the access could be improved slightly, this would involve the removal and setting back of a historic curtilage listed boundary wall and the potential removal of trees that are considered to have a high amenity value. The harm caused is not likely to outweigh the substandard visibility of the access.

Vehicular Exit

47. The proposed "out" access point is that which exists further along Hard Stiles at a point nearly opposite Skelton Lane. According to the TA, the access is 3.8m wide and serves both the Stable building which is being converted into 10 holiday lets and the adjacent farm building for which access is needed at all times. To prevent conflict, the Highway Authority has advised that the access would need to be widened to accommodate 2 – way traffic and the point where it adjoins the road. This is problematic given the presence of historic boundary walls, gate posts and change in land level between the access and the Sawmill. It is also noted that this access point is in frequent use by the farmer to move animals between his land and agricultural building. The track is therefore utilised for large farming equipment such as tractors and trailers which require a greater turning area and width of track which is likely to cause conflict with vehicles coming in the opposite direction.

48. The TA has calculated the visibility requirements using "Manual for Streets" (MFS) criteria. However, the Highway Authority has pointed out that the County Council has a policy with regard to when 'MfS' criteria should be used at a given location rather than 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' (DMRB) criteria. They have confirmed that in this location the access is required to meet 'DMRB' standards which would result in minimum visibility splays of 2.4m x 90m to be achievable, based on the 30mph speed limit for this section of Hard Stiles. The actual existing visibility splay is 2.4m x 26m which is substantially below the standard.

The "Grand" entrance

49. It is suggested that this entrance off Cat Bank may be used on occasions under the control of a banksman. Whilst there is no objection in principle to the use of this entrance on certain occasions, it would need to be controlled so that each wedding event does not become "an occasion." The Highway Authority have indicated that a method statement would be required for the operation of the entrance and that if vehicles were also using it as an exit, temporary traffic management measures and an accompanying 'streetworks' application may be required for each instance of use.

Car parking

50. The site layout plan includes the provision of 75 car parking spaces. This is slightly misleading as it also includes spaces that are required to be provided for the Stables development of 10 holiday lets which already has approval and is nearing the completion of construction. The Highway Authority has advised that 89 spaces are required for both this and the Stable development combined, plus whatever is required for the Vaults cellar bar and wine tasting rooms which, it is unclear whether they are to be operated only in conjunction with staying guests or for external members of the public. The total car parking space figure can be broken down for the relevant uses as follows;
    - 'The Sawmill' (119 m2) - 1 space per 5 m2 = 24
    - 'The Dog House' (1 space per 5 m2) = 15
    - 'The Vaults' = unknown
    - Apartments (1 space per bedroom) = 25
    - Staff (23 FT Equivalent, 1 space-3 staff) = 8
    - 'The Stables' = 17

51. Although the standards of the Highway Authority are acknowledged, the car parking requirement appears to be understated. 24 spaces for a wedding event of 70 people and 8 staff spaces for a large – scale development in a rural area where public transport options are limited, seems optimistic.

52. The TA refers to additional over – flow parking for up to 50 additional cars being provided elsewhere in the estate. However, no information has been provided to demonstrate where and how this could be provided. It is also difficult to understand where this car parking could be located as the estate has very limited opportunity to accommodate significant numbers of cars as discussed above. Space is constrained either through the setting of the listed buildings, the sloping nature of much of the site and the designed landscape and significant tree planting. Whilst there is a small public car park within the village this is frequently utilised by members of the public that travel to walk around the area. If this is being relied on to provide overspill car parking it would be insufficient and likely to result in parked vehicles being displaced around the narrow approach roads to the village which would be harmful to the character of the area as well as potentially prejudicing highway and pedestrian safety.

53. In light of the Highway Authority objection to the development on the grounds of an under – provision of car parking, insufficient visibility from the vehicular exit and potential interruption of the free flow of traffic it is considered that the proposal does not comply with the requirements of policy SP4 (g and k) of the Local Plan.

Impact on the Setting of the Conservation Area

54. Markse Hall, the Kennel building and the formal gardens on the opposite side of Cat Bank all border the designated Conservation Area for Marske Village which lies outside of the National Park boundary. Section 72 of the Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. The impact of the development on views in and out of the Conservation Area is likely to be limited given that it predominantly relates to the conversion of existing buildings which have a good degree of tree cover, that along with the natural topography of the land help to create a self – contained site which is not readily visible in public views. The only discernible changes really visible from outside the site would be the entrance barriers on the "in and out" access roads and the new car parking area on the raised land to the left of the Sawmill. Whilst this car parking area is not ideal in terms of the impact on trees and the setting of the listed building,

a car park next to a building would not be unexpected and therefore unlikely to cause significant harm to views out of the Conservation Area. In this regard, the proposal complies with the requirements of the Act and policy L1 of the adopted Local Plan.

Impact on the Dark Skies of the National Park

55. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that proposals for new development should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. Likewise, in accordance with policy SP4 (t) of the Local Plan, any development should not give rise to an unacceptable impact on the darkness of the night sky. Since the submission of the application, the National Park has become an officially recognised Dark Sky Reserve and the impact of artificial light sites within the boundary designation has become an even more important consideration.

56. In this case, the site has existed as private residential homes within Marske Hall in recent years. This low – key use has resulted in limited external light emanating from the building. External lighting and lighting from within the buildings has the potential to adversely affect the dark night skies of the National Park, a 'special quality' of the National Park.

57. As this proposal suggests some wedding guests would be staying in Marske Hall and potentially the connected Stable building. The walk between the Hall and the Sawmill at night would be over 120m on an unbound track in complete darkness. There is therefore likely to be pressure for a significant number of lights on and around the buildings and access routes due to the volume of people using the site on an evening, particularly following a wedding reception. The applicant has suggested that lighting would be by small lanterns and mini LED floodlights. However, a detailed lighting scheme to indicate how much lighting, their locations and luminosity has not been presented for consideration. Likewise, no thought has been given to the potential for internal light spillage from within the glazed extension to the rear of the Kennel building. However, this could be readily mitigated through the use of glazing treatments, an internal lighting scheme to ensure light is focused downwards where it is needed, or replacing the glazed roof with zinc as per the section of extension over the toilet area.

58. In the absence of a comprehensive lighting scheme for the whole site, the development could have a harmful affect on the Dark Sky Reserve status of the National Park. A lighting scheme should be provided prior to the determination of the application, as without it, the effects are unknown. At present the proposal fails to demonstrate compliance with policy SP4 (t) of the Local Plan or paragraph 180 of the NPPF.

Impact on Trees

59. Paragraph 175 of the NPPF states "development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Wholly exceptional reasons are defined as being where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat.

60. The application has been supported by arboricultural impact and method statements to outline the extent of works to trees within the site. The Trees & Woodlands Officer has confirmed that the Marske estate consists of mixed broadleaved woodland, particularly the section to the west of the Sawmill which acts as a buffer to nearby ancient woodland. Whilst the Tree Officer suggested that a small parking area and the resultant small loss of trees for circa 6 spaces alongside the Sawmill could potentially be considered acceptable (given the challenging

conditions for providing sufficient parking on the site), the amended proposal provides 14 spaces, a much larger area with significantly more tree loss than was envisaged as being acceptable. The car parking area would result in the removal of approximately 380sqm of trees, while the scheme proposes new woodland planting around the estate of circa 1800sqm. If this area was to be planted with native broad leaved species it would extend existing areas of woodland and provide for compensatory habitat creation.

61. The Trees & Woodlands Officer has indicated that given the site constraints, characteristics for new woodland parking and the level of compensatory planting the development could be considered to be acceptable. However, this acceptance is on the proviso of the applicant agreeing to provide a Management Plan for the woodland areas on site to outline the appropriate future management of the trees on site (each woodland compartment would be expected to be managed differently based on the historical aspects, feature trees and habitats). The plan should;
    - seek to improve the structural (age and habitat) and species diversity of the woodland area to the west of the site, including consideration of the loss of ash, improvement of deadwood habitat and also the creation of a 20m woodland edge within the woodland (dense planting of native small trees and shrubs) to improve the graduation between the woodland and adjacent land use.
    - include details of the new woodland planting area (species mix, planting design and density, protection and aftercare to ensure successful establishment).

    A site wide Arboricultural Plan to cover the management of the feature trees in the more traditional garden areas, and ensure appropriate next generation planting around the site would also be expected.

62. Despite this, there is real concern that there would always be a greater pressure on trees on the site due to the scale of the development and the level of activity that would bring. In future, particularly as the Highway Authority does not consider that there is sufficient car parking for the proposal now, there will be greater pressure to extend the parking into the surrounding woodland. Additionally, it is considered that despite the amount of compensatory planting offered there are no wholly exceptional reasons why a development resulting in the loss of woodland should be allowed. The loss of the woodland is only required to accommodate car parking for a use that has been deemed to be unsuitable and too intensive for this particular site for the reasons discussed above. The acceptability of the loss of trees is therefore found wanting in respect of both paragraph 175 of the NPPF and policy W3 of the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 – 2030).

Impact on Protected Species

The Sawmill & Kennel Building

63. The information supplied by the applicants concerning bats comprises a report by Bombus Ecology and a letter from the agent. The report includes a letter/briefing note that details the findings of a 'bat risk assessment' at the Sawmill conducted on 4 September 2019.

64. The buildings are described as "sub-optimal for bats." However, it does not outline any systematic approach that has been followed in assessing whether the building contains any potential roost features. No bat activity surveys or findings have been provided. The Wildlife and Conservation Officer is concerned about this and advises that the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that a European Protected Species would not be adversely affected in re – roofing and converting the Sawmill to an events venue. In this case, this has not been evidenced.

Marske Hall

65. Marske Hall is a large three-storey building divided into accommodation units with roof voids above. The Bombus Ecological report, indicates that there is evidence of Pipistrelle bat droppings throughout the roof voids of the Hall, but the appearance of the droppings and the occurrence of cobwebs throughout most of the voids led to the conclusion that there was no recent roosting by this species inside the voids.

66. The 'annexe' to the main Hall, has separate roof voids. Here evidence was found of roosting bats and the report speculates that these would have been Brown – long eared bats. Whilst the Senior Wildlife & Conservation Officer acknowledges that the species are highly likely to be Brown long – eared bats, the evidence is not as conclusive as it should be. The documents from Rural Solutions and Bombus Ecology (both written by the same author) argue that the exact nature of the roost is immaterial (and does not need to be absolutely established) because the roof void above flat 9 will not be affected by the proposed development. The Wildlife and Conservation Officer is not sufficiently reassured by this as the flats below the roof void are to be remodelled and therefore disturbance to the roof through for example the installation of new wiring could be required. The Ecological report also fails to consider the basement area of the Hall which the Wildlife & Conservation Officer suggests could be a suitable location for providing roosting (including hibernation sites) for bats.

67. In addition to the above, there is the consideration that new lighting and works to trees and vegetation within the estate could affect the habitual flight paths and access points to the roost used by the bats roosting above flat 9. The bat activity survey carried out was outside the time that the Bat Conservation Trust deems to be the optimal period for finding maternity roosts. Unsurprisingly, no bats were found. Consequently there is scant information to determine what impact the development might have on a potential maternity colony's ability to commute to and from a nest or to judge whether they may be negatively affected by any new lighting. The Ecological report contains some general recommendations, but it is unclear whether they form a commitment from the developers to carry out the measures or whether they are recommendations that ought to be "considered" and may or may not be taken up. Unfortunately, the report is too general in nature and needs to focus on specific proposals that can be examined and considered fully. This is another reason that a full lighting scheme should be presented for consideration prior to determination, particularly in the instance where an approval might be granted.

68. Sadly, the information provided on the potential of the buildings to support bats is inconclusive. Likewise the lack of details around topics such as external lighting has failed to consider any likely impacts on protected species. The Senior Wildlife & Conservation Officer has objected to the proposals on the grounds that the proposals could be harmful to protected species. It is therefore considered at this stage that the proposed development would not comply with the relevant provisions of policy W1 of the adopted Local Plan.

Biodiversity Enhancement

69. In addition to understanding the impact of development on protected species, policy W2 of the Local Plan requires all development proposals that would have an impact on biodiversity to make a proportionate on - site contribution to wildlife enhancement. Although the proposed development predominantly relates to the conversion of existing buildings, this does not negate the need for biodiversity enhancement. The conversion of 2 redundant buildings, removal of trees and provision of new hardstandings for car parking are all likely to have an impact on biodiversity. Whilst in a letter from the agent it is stated that, "the scale of the development is largely connected to the beneficial reuse of the existing listed buildings, but

the applicants will be providing suitable net gain (for biodiversity) commensurate with the proposed development." Despite this, no tangible proposals have been put forward that include either a mitigation scheme or biodiversity enhancement plan. The proposal fails to comply with policy W2 and the Wildlife & Conservation Officer objects on this basis.

Viability

70. The planning application has been accompanied by a financial appraisal and additional information which is not public but has been made available to Members for their consideration. The financial appraisal is submitted to back up the claim that the conversion of the Sawmill to 2 dwellings as was granted in 2016 under application R/31/106B, is not financially viable. This permission is considered to have lapsed without being implemented. There is therefore no readily available fall – back position for this building and planning permission would be required for any kind of new use.

71. The financial information is based on the conversion of the Sawmill to 2 dwellings but the previous permission actually granted a dual use allowing the units to be occupied as private dwellings or as holiday lets. It is the applicant's business to rent out high – end holiday accommodation. Therefore, the concentration on the value of dwellings to sell and the exclusion of the yield that could be gained from renting the units as holiday accommodation, seems misleading.

72. The applicant suggests that the only way to make the whole development viable is by having year – round events alongside the guest accommodation. It is suggested that this level of use is necessary in order to support the accommodation use through the quieter winter months when it is in less demand. Since the application was submitted the UK has experienced a global pandemic that has increased the demand for staycations further, in part due to the restrictions imposed on foreign travel. This argument may no longer be as valid as it once was. Evidence from the Tourism Team also suggests that tourism growth has occurred for both serviced and non – serviced accommodation in the National Park through the winter months classed as October – March (see table below) in the last 5 years.

73. The financial appraisal considers the financial return that would be possible from the events uses at the site. Local residents have pointed out that the applicant is in the process of converting Marske Stables, next to the Sawmill to holiday units without an events venue and they question his claim. Several local residents have also advised that a member of the community made an asking price offer to buy the Sawmill to convert it into a single family home. They engaged a quantity surveyor who suggested that the building costs that were proposed were within the projected valuation of the completed property.

74. The financial appraisal is not disputed but it is not conclusive. Of particular concern is the focus on the previously approved and proposed uses. Whilst the events venue may be the optimal use for the applicant in terms of the financial return they are expecting, it is not necessarily appropriate for the historic building or the site, for the reasons discussed in the sections above. There are likely to be other less intensive uses that could provide an economic return such as a spa and gym, restaurant or café and additional accommodation units that may add to the tourist offer for the site. Local residents have suggested that some of the accommodation units should be local occupancy dwellings or affordable houses to support the permanent population of the village. Whilst this would be desirable from a planning point of view, and policies L2 and C2 support these kinds of uses in principle, there is no requirement for the applicant to have to provide such units.

75. Unfortunately, no options appraisal has been carried out to demonstrate what other uses have been considered for the Sawmill and specifically the reasons why they might not be economically viable. This would be required if the Authority was to consider the proposal as "enabling development." Nevertheless, it is considered that limited weight should be attached to the viability claim, particularly given the harm identified with regard to the overdevelopment of the site.

Parish Council Comments

76. The Parish Council requested that this application be considered by the Planning Committee due to the scale of the development and the potential impact on neighbouring residents and the wider village of Marske. Their consultation comments can be viewed in full on Members extranet. The material considerations raised by the Parish Council have been discussed in detail in the substantive body of this report.

CONCLUSION

77. Whilst both the NP Management Plan and the Local Plan seek to support the restoration and re – use of nationally important historical sites, it is not to be "at any cost" with the development required to be appropriate in terms of its impact. It is fully recognised that the proposal would bring about benefits such as new employment opportunities, as well as increasing the tourist "accommodation offer." The construction phase could benefit local builders and tradespeople as well as the post – construction creation of hospitality jobs such as housekeepers and event staff. Tourists staying in the accommodation are likely to spend money in local shops, pubs, cafes and tourist attractions and wedding guests if not staying on site, would help to boost other accommodation provider's occupancy rates. However, the benefit to the local economy is unquantified and needs to be balanced against the negative aspects of the proposal.

78. Objective A2 of the National Park Management Plan (2019 – 2024) seeks to maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found. Given the characteristics of the Marske Hall estate and the wider village and the nature, intensity and cumulative impact of the multiple new uses proposed, this application would result in development of a significant scale that would undoubtedly change the atmosphere of the area. This change would be detrimental to the naturally peaceful and serene character of the village, with the wedding venue proposal particularly catastrophic to the residential amenity of Scriddlehurst as acknowledged by the Environmental Health Officer. The concerns of local residents are considered to be well founded and the sheer volume of letters raising concerns about the proposal is telling.

79. Regrettably the application is not packaged comprehensively and there are many elements that are simultaneously contradictory or not sufficiently justified or evidenced for example, the position of the proposed car parking area between the Hall and Kennels, the impact on protected species or on the significance of the listed building. It is considered that the application also seeks to play down the impact the events will have in terms of noise and disturbance and highway safety. A less – intensive proposal of alternative uses could still have positive benefits to the applicant, the local community and visitors to the National Park. Policy L2 is flexible in allowing a number of different economic re – uses for a traditional building including residential, visitor accommodation (holiday lets, bunkhouse accommodation, retail, restaurants/cafes etc) and employment uses such as offices. This proposal is not therefore the only option for this site or its listed buildings. Whilst the Sawmill is a building at risk due to the condition of its roof, the remainder of the building is not in such a perilous condition that the wedding venue is its only option of salvation.

80. Despite the benefits identified in this case, the planning balance is found wanting because of the negative impacts arising from the proposal. The proposal is considered to be contrary to policies SP1, SP2, SP4, L1, L2, L3, W1, W2 and T4 of the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 – 2030), paragraphs 175, 180, 193, 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) and objectives A2 and A6 of the National Park Management Plan (2019 – 2014).

RECOMMENDATION

81. It is recommended that permission be REFUSED for reasons based on the following:

1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal amounts to the overdevelopment of a site of significant historical and architectural value due to the level of activity the short - term holiday lets and events venues would generate, the under provision of car parking, the removal of mature trees, the creation of noise and disturbance and harm to the setting of the listed buildings, namely Marske Hall and the Kennel building. The level of activity would harm the deeply rural, tranquil and serene character of Marske Village resulting in significant harm to the special qualities of the National Park. The proposal would be contrary to policies SP1, SP2, SP4, T4, L1, L2, L3 and W3 of the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 - 2030), paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), and Section 11A(1) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.

2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed events venues specifically the proposed wedding venue would cause significant noise and disturbance until 0100hours, 7 days per week that would be injurious to the amenity afforded to the occupants of Scriddlehurst. The noise from amplified music and visiting patrons until the early hours would be harmful and disturbing to the quiet, rural character of Marske Village. The proposal would be contrary to policies SP2 and SP4 (n & s), of the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 - 2030).

3. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed development would be harmful to highway safety due to inadequate visibility splays at the exit access, interference with the free flow of traffic on Hard Stiles and the under provision of car parking spaces that will lead to parking on the local highway network to the detriment of pedestrians and other road users. The proposed development is contrary to policy SP4 (g & k) of the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 - 2030).

4. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the proposals would not detrimentally harm a European Protected Species (bats). In addition, no measures have been provided for biodiversity enhancement. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy policies W1 and W2 of the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015 - 2030).