

Moorcroft
Village Street
Keldholme
Kirkbymoorside
York
YO62 6ND
6th January 2018

Ref: 17/01455/FUL

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing, with regret, to object to the above planning application. When I supported an earlier application from Mrs Lawson for improved farm facilities, I raised concerns about the frequency of what was described by the agent as hosting of "occasional weddings". Now that Mrs Lawson, (tenant of Deepdale Farm, Village Street, Keldholme) has begun the retrospective process of regulating her development of a "wedding venue" business, I must write to object to her proposals for change of use of Deepdale Farm as detailed in the retrospective planning application above. The applicant's web-site (www.deepdalefarmweddings.com) clarifies the scale of this business development with several themes such as "festival weddings", "rustic barn weddings", and "a relaxed, barn dance style event". The venue is also displayed as an airbnb venue. (As I understand it, airbnb is not welcomed by the tourism industry which regards airbnb an unregulated business).

I ask you to understand that I raise my objections reluctantly, and after the unregulated setting up and development of this venture in 2014. (Mrs Lawson gives various dates for the formulation of ideas for the current business, based on family weddings and charity events). I do not believe that Mrs Lawson intends any harm to her neighbours, however, there are "unintended consequences" of this business. It is these "unintended consequences" that I would like to explain. The scale of the developing business is enormous. The events take place over several days. The web site makes it clear to potential customers that they can begin setting up on a Thursday morning for a weekend event and take down and remove their catering equipment on the following Sunday. Alternative arrangements apply for mid-week events. As one event gives way to another, any local resident is faced with an on-going sequence of setting-up, happening and taking-down of all associated goods.

One of the restrictions to the growth of this business has been the seasonal nature of outdoor weddings in North Yorkshire. One such event a month for six months of the year (including charity events) is just about tolerable. The ongoing growth of the unregulated business now makes it not only a 24/7 reality but also one which can be available over the full twelve months. Hallowe'en party anyone? Please do not think I jest here, because a couple of weddings a week is already an enormous leap from "hosting an occasional wedding".

Everyone loves a wedding and village weddings or outdoor occasions have romantic associations. It is an occasion for joy and merriment - a feast or festival. There will be food and drink, music and dancing and everyone will have a great time - and there will be noise. In small communities these events happen occasionally, but a commercial enterprise advertised through social media is a different thing altogether. Some guests, possibly arriving in the dark, will never have had cause to drive up a farm track before. (We certainly overheard one such guest proclaiming "I'm not taking my car up there"). Therefore, consider the situation of the local resident, unlikely to be on the guest list of the Bride and Groom - or of the bride and groom the following week, and so on, week after week, twice a week sometimes, your role is to listen to the commercial vehicles struggling to gain access to Deepdale Farm via the farm track during the days leading up to the event. This is followed by guests during the day or during the early evening in vehicles or on foot, then the music from the band and disturbance from the fireworks when darkness falls. Mrs Lawson does state in her "Terms and Conditions" that fireworks are not permitted. It's hard to complain when someone has broken the rules or failed to heed common courtesies, as she must have realised by now.

This brings me back to the "unintended consequences" mentioned in my earlier paragraph. Mrs Lawson doesn't throw the empty bottle into the field which we remove. She doesn't turn on the band music or come up our drive in mistake for the farm track. One such commercial vehicle reversed so hastily back down our drive and then up the farm track that it cracked our property identification board. But, in one form or another, these interferences with our daily routine happen regularly. Sometimes we pick up signs that have been erected insecurely to advertise a wedding or put pieces of burst balloon into a bin. We don't telephone to complain because each small irritation could be seen to be trivial or the responsibility of the client rather than the venue provider. The signs appear by our entrance, or attached to a road sign, or at the junction with the A170 (I think it was Sam and Zoe's wedding sign that remained for many months).





A most regular feature is the disturbance from car headlights after midnight coming down the farm track. The track curves on its route so that we see and hear vehicles leaving the venue.

Mrs Lawson has a history of applying for planning permissions in retrospect. What she has created is a business with specific, but flexible intentions. Indeed, she described (in Open Air magazine in 2016) the growing site, "This year is our first as an official business". In that issue she also refers to the potential for holding other events such as hen parties.

The scale of this business is massive. I have concerns about disturbance to people and to wildlife. Others have written about the unsuitability of the farm track and its proximity to property and pedestrians and to the visibility of yurts and other buildings from the A170.

Please put this 24/7 camping, festival extravaganza back in its box, before we find North Yorkshire's answer to Glastonbury spilling over into the adjacent quarry.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Breakell (Mrs)