Dear Ms Saunders

Please find attached an objection letter to revised planning application NYM/2018/0094/FL plus two additional attachments as supporting evidence detailed in the letter,

Yours sincerely

Dr John R & Mrs V Allan
Dear Ms Saunders,

Objection to revised planning application NYM/2018/0094/FL

We wish to lodge a formal objection to the revised planning application NYM/2018/0094/FL on the following grounds:

General

The revised planning application has addressed some of the concerns raised in our original objection in that the applicant has relocated the access path to be further from the village houses and has undertaken to block the track that would otherwise lead from the sculpture along the back of nos. 5-10. We welcome this revision, but it fails to address the most serious concerns about additional visitor numbers, car parking and traffic safety, none of which have been properly assessed by the applicant, plus the fact that the applicant has not assessed possible alternative locations for the sculpture which, we contend, is totally out of character with the appearance of the village as it now stands.

Since we submitted our previous objection, the applicant called an informal consultation meeting with the village residents at which it was promised that the artist would be contacted and asked whether the sculpture could be relocated. Unfortunately we have received a communication from the applicant which states that they have not contacted the artist as they promised to do. The communication from the applicant also states that they will move some of the attractions away from the Ellerburn trail and look into the other issues raised by the village residents. Frankly, we have no confidence in the applicant actually carrying out and non-binding commitment that they make in connection with the planning process. When the new visitor centre was constructed the village residents were assured that there would be no further development to the south of the village in order to avoid disturbance. After this the Ellerburn Trail, which is now attracting tens of thousands of visitors through the village was constructed. The most recent communication from the applicant states that the location for the sculpture is needed because ‘it has important resonance with the original work camp’. We would like to point out a number of errors and inaccuracies in the applicant’s planning submission and supporting documents about the historical relevance of the proposal to Dalby Village, which call into question the entire rationale for siting the sculpture in Dalby Forest, let alone the need to locate it so close to the village with the consequent disruption and nuisance to the residents. The supporting documents to the application state that the Nissen huts were constructed after the First World War and housed soldiers and prisoners of war who were employed to plant the
forest. This provides the link to the 14-18 Now initiative, which is supplying funding for the artwork. Unfortunately this is not true. The huts were actually opened in April 1934 to house unemployed people aged 18-35, none of whom would have fought in the Great War, with a view to providing training in countryside skills (we attach a copy of the Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury articles that celebrate the opening of the facility). The Nissen huts in Dalby were, therefore, constructed closer to WW2 than WW1, they never housed prisoners of war, and they were not part of the founding of the Forestry Commission, at least in its earliest phase. The rational for having to locate the sculpture in Dalby Forest or close to Dalby Village as part of the 1914-18 centenary celebration is, therefore, spurious and we contend that the applicant can, and should, look to locate the sculpture elsewhere which it can do without any loss of relevance to the 1914-18 celebrations. We raised these issues with the applicant at the recent consultation meeting to make them aware of the errors in their planning submission, but they have declined to approach the artist and have failed to consider possible alternative locations, either within Dalby or elsewhere in the Forestry estate.

As the deadline for objections is fast approaching, and in the absence of any further communication from the applicant, we are left with no option other than to sustain our objection on the grounds laid out below.

1 Appropriateness of the development for the local area.

The National Park’s Planning Development Policy section 3: Design states _inter alia_ that applications may be approved if ‘The siting, orientation, layout and density preserves or enhances views into and out of the site, spaces about and between buildings and other features that contribute to the character and quality of the environment’; and ‘The scale, height, massing, proportion, form, size, materials and design features of the proposal are compatible with surrounding buildings’.

We contend that this development, involving the construction of a copy of a grey Nissen Hut approximately 10m long by 3m high, is not consistent with the character of the local area. We can find no reference in the National Park planning guidance concerning sculptures or other works of art, but since this installation is a direct copy of a building in size, shape and colour, we believe that it should be considered as a building in the absence of any other guidance.

Whilst Nissen Huts were obviously a feature of the forest in its early days, they have not been present in the village for many years, and when we purchased our property from the Forestry Commission, we (and all of the other property owners) were required to sign a covenant imposing a variety of restrictions, including the frequency and colour of the painting of our property order to ‘preserve the character of the village, which is somewhat unique’. That character, identical white-painted houses clustered around a village green, which we are required to preserve, does not involve Nissen Huts or similar buildings. Were we to apply for permission to erect a 10m long, 3m high grey Nissen Hut in our back garden it would, in all likelihood, be refused because of its impact on the character of the village.
and inappropriateness of design and materials. We submit that the same standard should be applied to this application and that it should be refused.

2 Unacceptable increase in Disturbance

The National Park Planning Core Policy A: Delivering National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development states inter alia that priority will be given to applications that ‘Provide a scale of development and level of activity that will not have an unacceptable impact on the wider landscape or the quiet enjoyment, peace and tranquillity of the National Park, nor detract from the quality of life of local residents or the experience of visitors.’

Development Policy 14: Tourism and Recreation states inter alia that New tourism development and the expansion or diversification of existing tourism businesses will be supported where: The development will not generate an increased level of activity, including noise, which would be likely to detract from the experience of visitors and the quality of life of local residents.

The development of the Ellerburn Trail and its subsequent use as a children’s attraction using the Gruffalo and other fictional characters to attract more visitors has already had a huge impact on the residents of Dalby Village, especially those in nos. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10 whose properties front onto the access route from the visitor car parks to the start of the trail. Information provided to us by the Forestry Commission shows that around 70,000 people used the Ellerburn trail in the past 12 months. Given that visitors need to pass through the village in both directions to access the trail from the car parks, this equates to a footfall of 140,000 per year. This footfall is not evenly distributed and is heavily biased towards weekends and school holidays when the stream of people passing the front of the houses in the village can be continuous. The impact of 140,000 people in terms of noise, loose dogs, excited toddlers and general intrusion means that nobody uses their front gardens in the village any more, and the resident’s car parks are frequently blocked with visitors cars, despite the signage recently erected by the Forestry Commission. This is already, in our view, an unacceptable level of intrusion that detracts from our quality of life and, indeed, probably detracts from the experience of visitors on crowded days.

The applicants have already stated in meetings with village representatives, and in the supporting documents to their application, that the development they propose will attract more visitors through the village, so the noise, disturbance and intrusion, which is already unacceptable, will only get worse. The new installation will further impact the village in that many of those coming to see it will remain close to the village to admire the sculpture rather than moving on further down the trail as happens at present. We contend that this development will exacerbate and already unacceptable situation and further detract from the quality of life of the village residents and the application should therefore be rejected.

3 Traffic safety

The National Park’s Development Policy 3: Design states inter alia that designs are likely to be acceptable if: The design takes account of the safety, security and access needs for all
potential users of the development and provides car parking provision in line with the standards adopted by the Authority.

Village residents, Forestry Commission staff, those accessing the fishing lakes near Paper Mill Farm, timber haulage lorries and others with legitimate business in the forest, as well as visitors (who frequently ignore the no-entry signs in attempting to drive through the village to the Ellerburn Trail), all drive along the access road that will lead to the sculpture. In addition, large numbers of cyclists also use this road to access the forest resulting in congestion and confusion when the trail is at its busiest. Residents leaving the designated car parking areas or accessing their garages run a gauntlet of loose toddlers, loose dogs erratic cyclists and inattentive pedestrians on a daily basis. The proposed development will only serve to make this situation worse and there has been no provision made in the application for dealing with the additional footfall and traffic that the new installation would attract if it were permitted. We contend that the design makes no provision for the safety security and access needs of the potential users of the development and should be rejected.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr John R. and Mrs V. Allan
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TRAINING CAMP NEAR PAKERING...A view of the Miners Home and Instructional Centre at Pakering, where a large number of unemployed men are being trained to become skilled miners. The Centre is being run by the Yorkshire Miners Federation, and is providing courses in mining skills and knowledge, with a view to permanent employment in the industry.

PREPARING THEIR TRAINING CENTRE...Some of the boys seen at the Yorkshire Instructional Centre working hard in the camp, in the officially opened premises.

THE R.A. SELECTION COMMITTEE...At the Royal Academy Exhibition, some of the boys from the Yorkshire Instructional Centre who were trained in the camp, are shown with the selection committee.

GRUBBY, M.P.'S DAUGHTER...A picture of a typical Yorkshire miner's family, with the M.P. and his wife at their home in the camp.

SILEN TRENCH...An aerial view of the mining area, showing the miners at work in the tunnels.

WEDDING OF MR. REGINALD MACKENNA'S SON...A wedding of a miner's son, with the bride and groom standing in the camp.

THE YORKSHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEAM...A team of Yorkshire schoolboys, who are taking part in a athletics meet, are shown with their coach.

NURSE TUNNEL...A nurse in the mining tunnels, attending to the injured miners.

AT MONTE CARLO MOTION...A group of miners seen at Monte Carlo.

RUGBY UNION TRIAL AT KIRKSTALL...A group of Yorkshire schoolboys taking part in a rugby match, with the Yorkshire Public School team.

MARCHING HOME...A group of miners seen marching home after a day's work in the mines.