

Jason Goodhead, aged 47, of Bluebell Close, added: "It would be good to see the building open again as a pub once it is sold. It was a nice pub and could provide decent food.

"It has kept opening and closing and must have changed hands four times in about five years and there was talk of it being redeveloped. It would be a shame if it were to become a shop.

"It's been ...

it needed a bit of money spent on the inside to bring it up-to-date."

Suzanne Lovatt, of Wardle Gardens, hopes the pub can be turned into a family-friendly venue. She added: "I would like to see it re-opening as a pub ...

... options a bit further afield in Leek but if it were to open as a carvery then that would be nice."

Located around 2.5 miles away from Leek, the pub has a car park at the front and side of the property that could house 25 cars.

According to the advert from Rory Mack Associates, it could be "re-opened as a public house or may suit alternative uses subject to obtaining the correct planning permission".

Holiday lets to become homes as council hears market is saturated

By Post&Times reporter
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A HOLIDAY complex in a rural village has been given permission for a change of use into three residential properties.

Councillors on Staffordshire Moorlands District planning applications committee have given the approval for the new homes at Rock House Farm, Town End Road, Foxt.

A report to councillors by planning officer Chris Johnston, who recommended approval of the application, said: "The planning statement confirms that the properties comprise one three-bedroom unit and two two-bedroom units.

"Two of the traditional stone barns were converted into holiday lets under a 2003 permission.

"These are the two closest buildings to the entrance to the property with one lying in the middle of the site, comprising one holiday let unit (three bedrooms) and the other, a longer L-shaped structure, adjoining the north boundary of the site next to the private lane. This is used as two let units (two bedrooms each) totalling three holiday lets in total on the site.

"Included in the application are letters from two separate Leek-based chartered surveyor/estate-agent/valuation firms stating that the market to sell holiday-let properties in the district is extremely limited with the current holiday lettings market saturated.

"One of the letters states one of the reasons is the current amount of accommodation on offer in the area at Alton Towers and other major schemes proposed and that occupancy rates of between 50 per cent to 70 per cent are considered essential to the businesses to be financially viable.

Six objections were received from local addresses stating several reason for refusal including:

- Insufficient on-site parking provision and the road is too narrow for parking, particularly for service vehicles;
- Overdevelopment of a cramped site;
- Harm to residential amenity;
- Loss of a tourist amenity for the area;
- Loss of visitor spending at local businesses like the village pub;
- Harmful impact on a heritage property to be included in a proposed Conservation Area;
- Unsustainable due to forthcoming loss of bus service and increase in traffic leading to more car journeys to services and workplaces;
- Would lead to increased use of adjacent private lane causing damage to it;
- Insufficient garden areas and parking areas for each dwelling.

One letter of support had been received from a local resident pointing out that there is a need for more houses in Foxt and that the district is saturated with holiday accommodation and empty holiday cottages.

The applicant's agent Ken Wainman said: "The business has not been viable for some time. There are no external changes and there is no impact on the landscape.

"The properties have been advertised nationwide with no takers. The homes will be modest in size for small family units. They have all the facilities for modern living."

Planning committee member Councillor P... Roberts said: "On the late letters sheet it states that patios do not have planning permission. I feel uncomfortable with it."

However councillor Peter Jackson said he would with officers recommendation for approval as business was struggling.