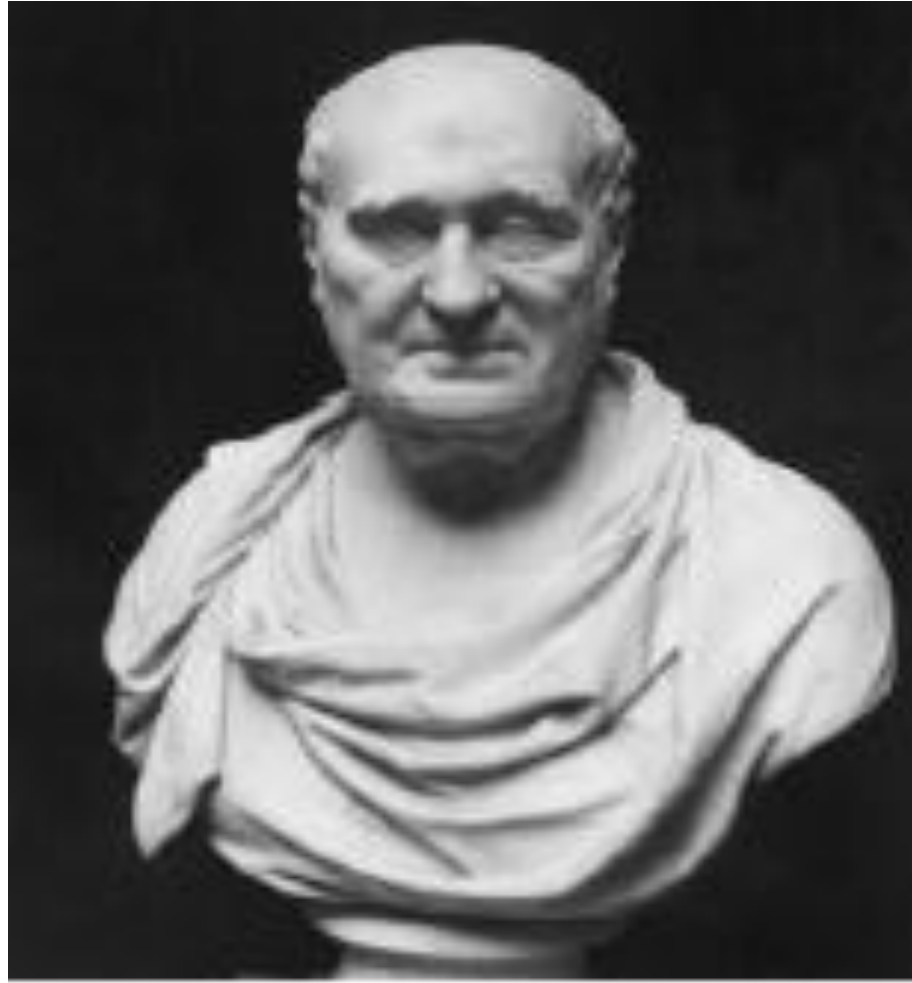


**BUXTON CRESCENT HOTEL AND THERMAL SPA**  
**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**SUPPLEMENT DATED 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2014**

**WORKS TO 4<sup>th</sup> FLOOR & SINGLE STOREY SERVICE EXTENSION**

Prepared by Nicholas Jacob Architects  
In support of applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent  
prepared and submitted by Curious Architects



John Carr of York

## **BUXTON CRESCENT HOTEL AND THERMAL SPA**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

For the following works:-

- New dormer windows on 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Crescent
- Adaptation of 6no. attic trusses on 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Crescent
- Removal of lime ash floor and upgrading of 4<sup>th</sup> floor structure
- Single storey rear extension to East Pavilion

### **CONTENTS**

- 1 Introduction
  - A How to read this document
  - B. A brief history of the site and its significance
  - D. Consultation
  - E. Philosophy
- 2 Relevant Conservation Guiding Principals
- 3 Heritage Impact Assessment

### **APPENDICES**

- 4 The Conservation Plan Policies (bound in to document)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### A. HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT.

The items referred to in the Heritage Impact Assessment and indicated in the first column are identifiable on the plans in the accompanying appendix document. These plans show the existing buildings with coloured tones indicating *the different construction dates*. The existing buildings are overlaid by a hatch to *indicate the proposed layout*. *Those elements not overlaid by the hatch (i.e. the areas of brighter colour) are to be removed in the proposal.*

Where there is hatched structure with no colour behind it this indicates new construction.

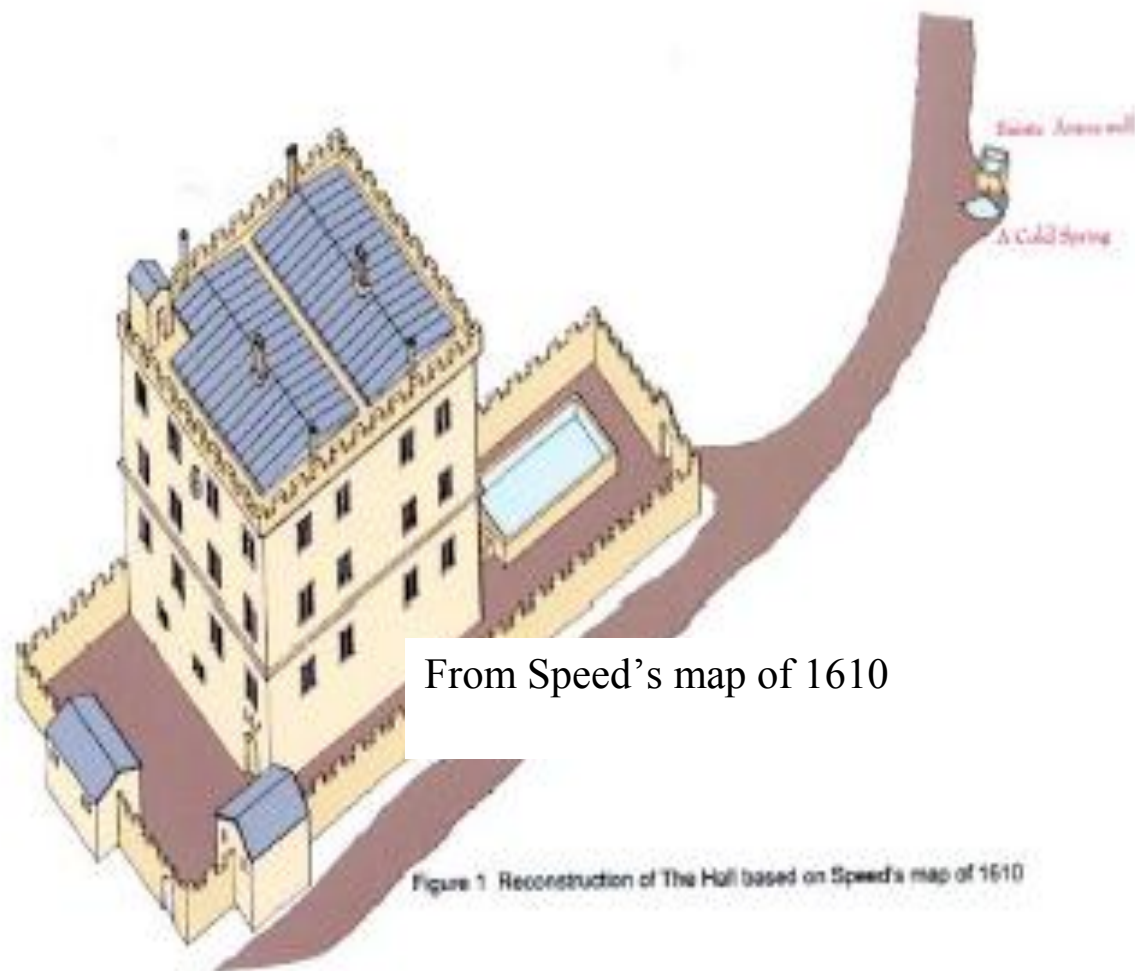
The areas of alteration are graded into four levels of significance red: (1) for highly significant; blue: (2) for medium significance; green: (3) for moderate significance and yellow: (4) for low significance. Clouds are shown on the drawings in the four colours with a reference against each indicating an item in the tabulated Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). Within the HIA, under the column for proposed work, there is a reference to the drawing on which the item is indicated e.g. 37882-122-2

The policies on which the document is based are extracted from the Conservation Plan. These are reproduced *in volume II*; further *relevant* Guidance Principles, are located in this document prior to the main impact assessment schedules.

### B. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SITE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

The town of Buxton is the site of a thermal spring around which the Romans built a spa complex. Following the dark ages, the medieval period saw this spring being a place of cure by receiving the waters of St. Ann's Well. This also saw the building of the Hall at Buxton and following a fire the new Hall. This is the place where Mary Queen of Scots was held under house arrest on the instructions of Queen Elizabeth of England. And it is here next to the Spa Bath as depicted by Speed on his map of Derbyshire that the Hall and subsequently the New Hall (now known as the Old Hall) is located. Following the destruction of the temple to the spring on the instructions of Oliver Cromwell, the spring fell into a period of little use. However, with the Georgian fashion of Spa visiting, Buxton had a new life, starting with John Barker's new baths adjoining the Hall at Buxton which were constructed in 1712. Through the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, a number of alterations were made to the baths culminating in a major re-design by Henry Currey between 1851 and 1856. At the same time, Henry Currey designed the new Thermal Baths which are outside our site.

The Crescent was built between 1779 and 1790 immediately to the east of the natural baths to form appropriate accommodation for those coming to take the waters. This was in an attempt to compete with the then fashionable spa bathing at Bath, the only other thermal spa in the country. It is evident that John Carr the Architect of the Crescents, who had designed this perfect semi-



## The Coat of Arms of Duke's of Devonshire

circular structure with fine elevations both to the front and the rear, would have instigated major re-designing of the baths, however, the only designs that have survived to this day by John Carr, appear to be of proposals done prior to the building of the Crescent. The Crescent was designed as an 18<sup>th</sup> Century leisure complex incorporating 2 or possibly 3 Hotels. The hotel was a very new form of building taking over from Inns as places of leisure and accommodation. It is significant that the difference between a Hotel and previous forms of accommodation was the inclusion of public 'assembly rooms'. Though many adaptations have occurred within the Crescent to support the demands of bathroom facilities and catering, the fabric of the Crescent has remained substantially intact.

The final building within the site is the Pump Room designed by Henry Currey and opened by the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 1894. The building is almost unaltered with the exception of the enclosure of the arcade at the front and the later removal of the two domes.

In 1937 the new baths were again re-constructed at a cost of £20,000 including a new Entrance Hall of red and white marble and a panelled oak rest room incorporated into the centre of the baths. The Natural Baths continued to be enjoyed until their eventual closure in 1972, when the new swimming bath behind the Opera House and Pavilion Gardens complex was opened by Princess Anne. Following the closure of the baths as public bathing in 1972 the only use that these buildings have had in recent years is as the Tourist Information Centre. Other parts of the Natural Baths have stood empty. The only use of the spa itself being the extraction of water for bottling, for the hospital site (in the original John Carr stables building) and to supply water to the modern swimming pool.

The pump room has in recent years had a number of uses including Micrarium (educational study exhibition of insects and microscopic life) and more recently as an art and crafts exhibition centre. The east part of the Crescent was taken over in the 1970's as council offices and public library, however, due to structural issues this was closed in approximately 1990. The west end, which was occupied by the St. Ann's Hotel, was compulsorily purchased in 1992 by Highpeak Borough Council and with the aid of English Heritage and the Heritage memorial fund have undertaken extensive repairs on the extensive external envelope of the Crescent.

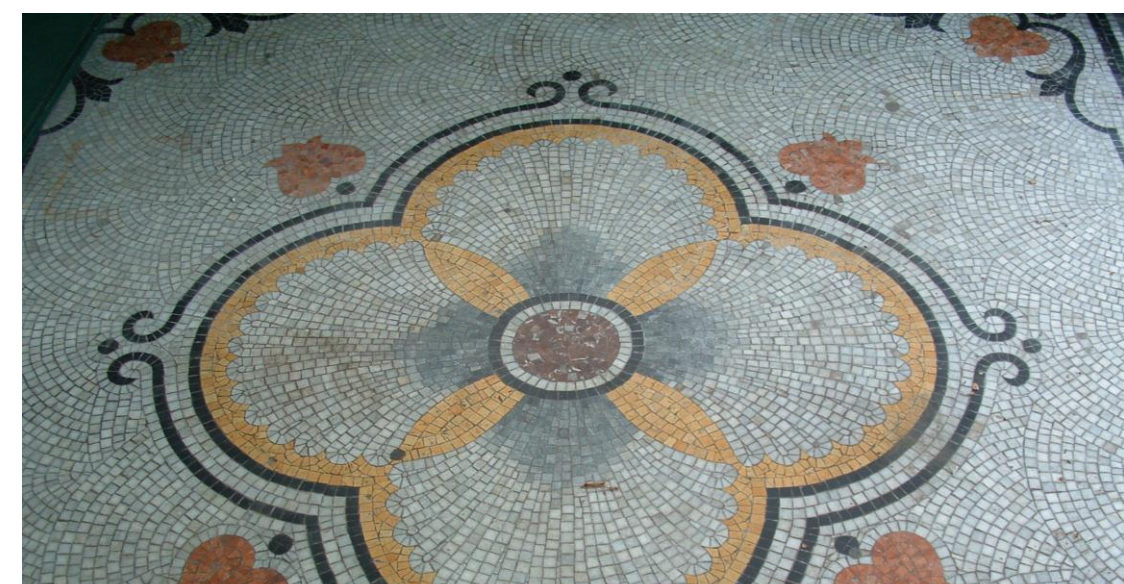
### **C. THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT**

The aim of the project is to restore and re-instate the Grade II Listed Natural Baths, the Grade II Listed Pump Room and the Grade I Listed Crescent while updating them to 21<sup>st</sup> Century levels of facility and thereby to re-generate this essential part of the centre, both geographic and economic, of the Spa Town of Buxton.

### **D, CONSULTATION**

This document is prepared in consultation with the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa Company Ltd, High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, English Heritage and The Heritage Lottery Fund.

This document is produced by the Architectural Team of Edmund Kirby, D.A Architecture and Nicholas Jacob Architects on behalf of the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa Company Ltd,



## The Pump Room Floor



The aim of this Heritage Impact Assessment is to review the Conservation Plan and justify the design proposals against it. In doing this ratification we have first reviewed the conservation policies within the plan. Since the production of the conservation plan in 1996 we believe that a number of the policies are not relevant to how we now understand these policies to be used. We have therefore prepared a new list of policies to be used within the conservation plan. These policies and the head policies from the conservation plan are laid out below. Following this introduction, we have tabulated the alterations to the buildings with reference against the new conservation policies. Following the Heritage Impact Schedule we attach a set of plans illustrating the locations of the elements referred to in the schedule and a set of plans showing the age of different parts of the structure.

### E. PHILOSOPHY

Views about the 'correct' or most appropriate philosophy of conservation for a particular building can vary widely. At one extreme is the philosophy of William Morris in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and which is still espoused by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. This approach respects every element, every change, every weather and worn surface, every fragment of craftsmanship wrought on the building and would do nothing to remove the patina of age or interfere with evidence of past generations' use.

An alternative view is that only the original pure design of an historic building has merit and that all later alterations are detractions from its original assumed or recorded design.

The latter view is rightly rejected by people who appreciate the changes made to an historic building over time as the story of that building's life and the social as well as the physical alterations that have taken place to keep it alive. This conserve 'as found' philosophy however, presupposes that all changes to a building have merit and have been carried out in a sympathetic way.

The proper reinstatement of architectural details or features from the past is as much part of the history of the building's development as are the alterations which have been, or may be, made to reflect the needs or aspirations of each phase of evolution.

In the case of the consciously designed 'polite' as distinct from vernacular buildings, which depend so much for their character on proportion, geometry, symmetry, rhythm and consistency of detail, there must be an argument for a balanced combination of conservation 'as found' and restoration. This may call for subjective judgements which will allow for restoration of elements of details where this can be justified and, conversely, for conservation 'as found' of elements of the buildings which are reflections of their time or the building's evolution.

The philosophy therefore recognises that the Spa Buildings are at but one stage in a long evolutionary process, and aims to conserve the buildings as they are found today whilst at the same time:

- Ensuring that the architectural quality, materials and method of construction of later and future alterations are of standard commensurate with the original building;
- Acknowledging that, where later alterations are of little interest in understanding the evolution of the building, reinstatement of original design detail may be justified where this will restore the overall architectural composition or contribute to enhancement of the wider townscape;

- Making sure that later and future alterations result in sufficient benefit to the continued and sustainable use of the building.

## The Ladies Bath Skylight

### 2. **RELEVANT CONSERVATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES** (to be read in conjunction with the Heritage Impact Assessment)

On reviewing the conservation plan policies it was decided that certain principles regarded as essential to these policies were not covered adequately. We have therefore introduced the following 16 'Conservation Guide Lines' to supplement the Conservation Plan Policies:-

- GP 1: Where ever possible the detail and fabric created by John Carr and Henry Currey is to be maintained and where necessary enhanced.
- GP 2: Work to be carried out using materials that match (as closely as possible) those used when the element was constructed and great care to be taken to minimise damage to historic fabric.



## Detail from the Ball Room

- GP 3: Further inspection of element required to clarify its age/condition/significance. Findings to direct decision as to treatment.
- GP 4: Activity required to enhance the usefulness of the historic space, enabling it to more effectively meet the 21<sup>st</sup> Century requirements of the site. The degree of the place's viability will reflect itself in the use as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century spa and spa hotel, protected and preserved through continuous use.
- GP 5: Activity required to restore the historic appearance of the element, enabling visitors to better appreciate the use for which it was constructed.
- GP 6: Works necessitated by the need to meet the upgraded safety/security requirements of the site.
- GP 7: Area to be affected to be photographically recorded and drawn record made before the execution of the works.
- GP 8: Works of dismantling/removal to be monitored by archaeologist.
- GP 9: Works necessitated by the need to meet statutory requirements in relation to access for disabled staff and visitors.
- GP 10: Works necessitated by the requirements to meet statutory fire regulations.
- GP 11: Dismantled historic materials to be labelled and removed to safe storage to enable restoration.
- GP 12: Works required to safeguard historic fabric from the short and long term damage/deterioration.
- GP 13: Design of new element to be informed by evidence found in archival drawings/photographs.
- GP 14: Activity required to enhance the historic (etc) appeal of the place. The degree to which the place's appeal is enhanced will be reflected in the Spa's success and ultimately in the long term preservation of its historic fabric and the Spa water.
- GP 15: Activity required to preserve and enhance the townscape.
- GP 16: Future planning to be guided by the presumption in favour of retaining historic fabric.

### 3 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

#### BUXTON CRESCENT HOTEL AND THERMAL SPA

#### PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO ATTIC BEDROOMS ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR of the CRESCENT & SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO THE EAST PAVILION

#### SUPPLEMENTARY HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014

To accompany applications for planning permission and listed building consent.

This report should be read in conjunction with the ground floor, 4<sup>th</sup> floor and roof plans, front and rear elevations, cross sections prepared and submitted by Curious Architects; also structural engineering details drawing prepared by Aecom Ltd.

**3.1 Background:** Despite the apparent visual scale of the Crescent, the Grade I listed structure contains fewer rooms than might initially be imagined. It is nevertheless intended that the building should be adapted to create a 79 bedroom hotel which can be operated to a five star standard. It is commonly accepted that, to support the cost of providing the appropriate level of service, it is usually necessary, even in areas of higher room rate, to provide not less than 90 keys. In the case of the Crescent, this is not possible and, even with the use of the attic floor, the architects have managed to create only 79 lettable bedrooms. The lower number of rooms may improve what might otherwise be expected in terms of its room occupancy which will help to mitigate the adverse impact of the static overhead costs to be supported by fewer rooms than is ideally the case.

**3.2 Adaptation of 6no. attic trusses:** 19 of the proposed rooms are located within the attic (4<sup>th</sup> floor) and these rooms will suffer some disadvantage compared with others in the hotel. The ceiling height is low (approx 2.15m) even at the highest part of the room and reduces to minimal levels as the roof slopes meet the external walls. Unfortunately, six of the rooms on the front are even more constrained by the space between the roof trusses which narrows towards the front of the building – this is illustrated on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor plan (Curious drawing no. (20) 007). In considering how these rooms might be furnished, it has become apparent that, if all the trusses are to remain, it would be unlikely that the bedrooms could be properly furnished. Indeed, it would only be possible to accommodate two persons if single beds are located either side of a substantial truss - an arrangement which, combined with the low ceiling height, would greatly reduce the likelihood of the rooms proving acceptable to five star guests. If the rooms were to be provided with the trusses remaining in place, the room rates would need to be substantially reduced and, even then, some guests would find the rooms unacceptable and would possibly migrate to other bedstock within Buxton. At the very best, the rooms would need to be marketed at substantially lower rates than the remainder of the hotel bedstock.

In consequence, we have with some reluctance, reached the view that six of the trusses would need to be adapted to turn the six rooms on the front into viable double bedrooms. This involves in each case the removal of a section of the principal rafter, a strut and two purlins along with the introduction of additional timber and steel strengthening. This together with trimming of common rafters either side of the truss allows the creation of headroom over the bed

space within dormer windows.

The alternative of proceeding with the improvement of the attic floor whilst retaining the trusses would not be welcomed because the lower quality of the rooms would impact adversely on the reputation of the hotel and, if sold at lower prices (the room rate would be at least 20% lower than the standard room rate in the hotel) it would damage the overall viability of the hotel. If, as an alternative, it were decided to proceed with the project without the six rooms, then this would also have a negative impact on profitability. Without doubt, a reduction of circa 7.5% of the available bedstock would impact to a similar extent on the overall turnover of the hotel, whilst the fixed overhead cost of maintaining a five star standard would not be materially reduced. The impact therefore of lower receipts and fixed overhead costs would undoubtedly have a significant impact on the profitability of the hotel and therefore its value and long term viability.

For the foregoing reasons, it is imperative that the six roof trusses are adapted but with an engineering solution which will minimise the loss of historic fabric and in a manner which will allow the bedrooms thus created to remain consistent with the historic layout of the building.

Enclosed with this statement are drawings indicating the present structural system at 4<sup>th</sup> floor level and the manner by which the roof and floor will be supported once the trusses have been adapted. This is in addition to structural interventions required to increase the load bearing capacity of the floors to make them suitable for the new hotel use.

**3.3 New Dormer Windows:** As stated above, detailed consideration of how the attic rooms can be furnished and to space standards appropriate for a 5 star hotel, has identified further significant shortcomings in all 19 rooms on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Crescent. This is due in all cases to a lack of headroom under the slope of the roof and the spacing of the trusses.

Front bedrooms: The creation of adequate headroom for a double bed is addressed by adapting one of the trusses in each of the six suites (as above) and construction of a wide dormer window. The Operator's preferred standard for a double bed is 2000mm plus a minimum of 600mm either side for access and a bedside table. By reducing the bed width to 1850mm and the space on either side to 500mm, the bed space fits exactly within one of the existing "double" dormer windows. Restricted headroom in the bathrooms and sitting areas can be overcome by the addition of "single" dormer windows. In each case, the ceiling height within the dormers will be approximately 1900mm; they will be fitted between the existing purlins and be of a traditional timber casement design. However, as they are a new element in the building we feel it would be appropriate to design them with slim double glazed units that are nowadays readily available and very discreet.

Rear bedrooms: Each bedroom and en suite occupies two structural bays as defined by the roof trusses. Whilst the en suite shower rooms can be accommodated in the space between two trusses without the need for additional headroom, the bed spaces are seriously compromised within the existing volume having insufficient space to circulate round a double bed. Again, we have come to the conclusion that additional headroom must be created by the introduction of dormer windows to make viable bed spaces; the beds in this instance being further reduced in width to 1550mm.

External appearance of dormers: The proposal is for the new dormer windows to match the existing in terms of scale, height relative to the parapet and general design i.e. traditional timber casements and lead clad cheeks and flat roofs. The dormers on the front are arranged to form symmetrical groups of 3 comprised of a single window either side of a double; each group relating to one of the 6 bedroom suites. Because the suites are identical, the overall composition will have a rhythm and symmetry appropriate to the front façade. The close proximity of the smaller dormers to the central double dormer makes construction at roof level difficult; the proposal therefore is to link the dormers

externally with lead clad boxings which are recessed so that the individual dormers remain expressed.

The dormers on the rear elevation are all the same size and have a regular rhythm reflecting the symmetrical arrangement of bedrooms about the staircases. To reduce their visual impact, it is proposed that the existing dormers that light the staircases will be removed and roofed over (each stair remains lit at 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level by a sash window) as will all other rooflights and dormers not required to light bedrooms.

The visual impact of the dormers, whilst relatively significant, is greatly reduced by their positioning behind the parapets; this makes them almost invisible except from the higher ground some distance to the north of the site.

The treatment of dormers lighting the front heritage rooms is still under consideration, there being a slight conflict between the arrangement compatible with the interiors and the desire to maintain symmetry across the whole elevation.

**3.4 Floor finish and construction:** The lime ash floor in the attic is in poor condition and not suitable structurally for the increased floor loadings required of a hotel; there is also widespread damage to the lath and plaster ceilings and further significant disturbance will be inevitable to both the lime ash and lath and plaster to provide access for the new steelwork to strengthen the floor. Furthermore, the performance of the existing 4<sup>th</sup> floor construction falls a long way short of the acoustic and fire resistance requirements. For these reasons, it is proposed to take up the lime ash floors and construct new floor and ceiling finishes which will provide the required structural, acoustic and fire rated performance; these designs are still being developed but we are seeking approval in principle to these changes. Lime ash floors in the heritage rooms will be retained and repaired.

**3.5 Single Storey service extension to rear of the East Pavilion:**

Background: As the front of house accommodation is limited and space is at such a premium this has forced the ancillary spaces which support the back of house operations to be located within the existing Crescent basement.

Beer stores, dishwashing, staff changing and dining accommodation together with the maid's supply and trolley store have been located within the Crescent's vaulted basement structure. However, due to the geometry of the vaults and their restricted headroom it results in a shortfall in the allocation of practical, usable space to fully support all the necessary functions required.

Justification: Situating furniture stores in the basement is not a practical or indeed a viable proposition due to issues with both maneuvering furniture through these spaces and their requisite storage within vaults with limited headroom. In addition to this the hotel operators have accepted that their laundry will have to be serviced off site due to the space pressures for ancillary accommodation. The furniture store has been located within the ground floor east pavilion and this in turn has necessitated the need for a single storey extension to the rear of the east Pavilion to house the delivery office and clean laundry store.

Design proposals & mitigation: The proposed extension has a flat roof behind a parapet. The parapet sits below the string course of the Crescent and is governed by the height of the parapet of the neighbouring Cavendish Arcade. The external face of the extension will be formed in ashlar stone and the geometry of the door aperture will take its precedence from the existing openings on the Crescent rear elevation.

The scale and form of the extension is modest in relation to the crescent and the simple design, choice of materials and detailing that match the existing building will all help to minimise its visual impact on the grade 1 listed Crescent. Its location, tucked into the NE corner of the site, further minimises its visual impact on the Crescent and its surroundings.

## APPENDICES

### 4 The Conservation Plan Policies

#### **Policy NB1: To retain and conserve the important features of the Natural Baths.**

**Reason:** From the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century onwards, several bath developments took place on the site of the Natural Baths culminating in the 1924 remodelling, internally and externally. As part of the process of continuous development, structural and decorative elements have survived from nearly all the major building phases.

NB1.1 Retain the front elevation subject to any necessary alterations to the roofline.

NB1.2 Permit appropriate alterations or replacement of the concrete flat roof as this alleviates a number of maintenance and security problems.

NB1.3 Permit re-roofing the arcade at the rear of the property.

NB1.4 Replace lanterns with less obtrusive or appropriate replicas.

NB1.5 Replace the windows flanking the covered passage to the West Pavilion as they are detrimental to the character of the building.

- NB1.6 Implement measures to protect the roof from vandalism.
- NB1.7 Permit well-designed and suitably positioned new openings on the rear elevation where these are necessary as part of a scheme for sympathetic adaptive re-use.
- NB1.8 Investigate the origins of the Paupers Bath to the rear of the site and consider any proposals for its future treatment, use and presentation on their merits.

**Policy NB2: To preserve historically and architecturally important spaces and features of the Natural Baths**

**Reason:** Perceived and assumed structural defects, combined with the ‘small cell’ nature of the building, make it particularly vulnerable to drastic alteration. Spa treatments and mineral bathing applications are subject to constant change and some changes to the Natural Baths will be an inevitable part of the evolution of the building. However, some rooms and spaces within the building, including the art deco ceramic tiling, are considered particularly worth of preservation.

- NB2.1 Preserve No 1 Pool, the rising point of the principal spring.
- NB2.2 Preserve No. 3 Ladies Pool.
- NB2.3 Preserve the Foyer.
- NB2.4 Retain in situ the tiling in the principal areas while adapting the building to a sustainable new use if practicable.
- NB2.5 Preserve undisturbed the basement so as to permit future archaeological exploration, conservation and presentation of earlier remains.

**Policy NB3: To protect the purity and continuity of the spring waters arising underneath the No 1 Pool.**

**Reason:** The purity, lack of contamination and continuity of flow of water to the Buxton Mineral Water Company Ltd is of paramount importance both commercially and for the reputation of the water and it is protected under agreement with the company. The High Peak Local Plan also seeks to protect the reputation of the water in view of its importance to Buxton.

- NB3.1 Carry out full consultation with High Peak Borough Council and the Buxton Mineral Water Company Ltd before any works are carried out or excavation undertaken which might affect the water sources or the supply pipework whether to known supplies or to any other adjacent spring or level affecting the water table.
- NB3.2 Allow for maintenance of the spring and apparatus at all times.

**Policy NB 4: To conserve important artefacts.**

**Reason:** There are a number of artefacts within the Natural Baths which provide clues to earlier therapies and treatments. Of these, the peat trucks and rails within the basement are the most important.

NB4.1 Conserve in situ peat trucks and any other artefacts or conserve by removal for display or storage in suitable conditions within the building or off-site.

**Policy NB5: Devise an effective ventilation and thermal insulation system which will eliminate structural problems caused by high humidity.**

**Reason:** The ever present high humidity levels in the building caused by the warm spring water has, in the past, resulted in outbreaks of timber decay and extensive corrosion of structural metal work. The management of this problem will be critical to the building's future preservation.

**Policy NB6: To secure the adaptive re-use of the Natural Baths in a way which will reflect their association with the natural mineral water.**

**Reason:** The long association of the site of the Natural Baths with the thermal spring is closely tied to the history of Buxton itself. This association should continue into the next century and beyond. Should an adaptive re-use which needed a link between the Crescent and the Natural Baths be required then the difficulty of linking the Crescent and Natural Baths means that other options would have to be considered.

NB6.1 Analyse the potential for linking The Crescent and The Natural Baths without detriment to the fabric, architectural interest or setting of the buildings.

#### **THE CRESCENT EXTERIOR**

**Policy CE 1: To conserve and where appropriate reinstate John Carr's original detailing while respecting historically significant later changes.**

**Reason:** Throughout 200 years of occupation as hotels, lodging houses, shops, a library and offices, the Crescent has undergone a number of changes to its original design by way of extension, demolition and alteration. Most of these changes were carried out prior to listed building control, but only a few of them have affected the rhythm and symmetry of the original designs, particularly to doors and windows. Such changes are not particularly significant in the evolutionary history of the Crescent but do affect the purity of John Carr's original designs.

CE1.1 Consider the reinstatement of glazing bars at first floor level.

CE1.2 Reinststate stone two part chimney pots following the original design to the two eastern chimney stacks.

CE1.3 If pots are to be replaced on any of the remaining stacks they should be replaced throughout, together with cornices.

CE1.4 Allow the reintroduction of original openings and joinery where these do not involve the destruction of later fabric or features of historic interest.

CE1.5 Reinststate the round-headed window on the ground floor front elevation. Allow the reinstatement of the continuous rear perimeter passage at cellar level on the west end of The Crescent, and associated protective railings.

CE1.6 Reconstruct masonry and windows where missing on ground floor of the rear elevation.

CE1.7 Preserve surviving cast iron window cills.

CE1.8 Assess the need for additional masonry repairs to the eroded stonework with a presumption for retaining original fabric while recognising the needs of structural stability, public safety and cost effective maintenance.

CE1.9 Reinstate and make safe steps to forecourt.

**Policy CE2: To maintain, through retention of the existing or construction of a new building of an appropriate scale, the enclosed character of the townscape between the Crescent and The Square.**

**Reason:** The old dining room is Edwardian and is surviving evidence of a later phase in the Crescent's development. Whilst there is a presumption, in view of its listed status, in favour of its preservation, its architectural qualities are limited and other options could be considered if these help to provide a viable use for the Spa Complex whilst at the same time protecting the valuable paved open space between the Crescent and The Square.

CE2.1 Consider a well designed, sympathetic new building on the site of the old dining room.

**Policy CE3: To retain five 20<sup>th</sup> Century copper wall lanterns on the front of The Crescent.**

**Reason:** The lanterns are good and increasingly rare early 20<sup>th</sup> century street furniture designed to be sympathetic to the building upon which they are fixed.

**Policy CE 4: To consider on their merits new dormers or roof lights where appropriate.**

**Reason:** The dormers in the former St Ann's Hotel have already been reinstated with the use of the English Heritage grant money. If the attic areas are to be put to beneficial use, further openings or roof lights may be required.

**Policy CE5: To allow the demolition of the rear porches**

**Reason:** The rear porches are later editions and have little architectural merit and have been severely damaged by more recent alterations.

#### **THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS**

**Policy AR1: To conserve the Ballroom and Card Room.**

**Reason:** The magnificent Ballroom and Card Room are of such quality that their preservation is considered paramount. If possible, it would be desirable to reinstate John Carr's original decorative schemes whilst ensuring the room can be put to a variety of uses.

AR1.1 Research the original floor covering and, in the light of the finding, carry out necessary structural repairs to the Ballroom floor and seek to restore the original floor finish.

AR1.2 Conserve and repair plasterwork and joinery.

AR1.3 Research the original decoration scheme.

- AR1.4 Redecorate and reinstate fittings, including the existing chandeliers.
- AR1.5 Ensure that any alterations or new fittings to the Ballroom or Card Room respect their quality.
- AR1.6 Seek specialist advice on the impact of any proposed alteration and furnishing on the acoustics of the Ballroom to ensure that the proposals are not detrimental to the original acoustics.

**Policy AR2: To allow the sensitive subdivision and alteration of the ground floor rooms.**

**Reason:** The ground floor rooms, in the former coffee and billiards rooms, have already undergone considerable alteration. Sensitive subdivision of the ground floor rooms, other than the entrance halls, staircase and landings, is therefore appropriate provided that due regard is had to the overall proportions of the room and to the locations of window openings.

- AR2.1 Retain the basic plan form of the entrance hall.
- AR2.2 In carrying out any sub-division, have regard to window positions, cornices and any other original feature.

**Policy AR3: To reinstate as far as possible the design concept for the decoration of the entrance hall, staircase and landings.**

**Reason:** Within the Assembly Rooms, the entrance hall, staircase and landings have suffered some of the most significant alterations, but are considered to be of importance in view of their ancillary role as an access to the Ballroom.

- AR3.1 Research the original decoration scheme.
- AR3.2 Redecorate and reinstate fittings, including a new central chandelier.
- AR3.3 Remove and, if necessary, replace draught lobby from ground floor entrance hall with more appropriate design.

**THE CRESCENT INTERIORS**

**Policy CI1: To retain and conserve the surviving features of John Carr's original internal arrangements.**

**Reason:** The inherent flexibility, which may have been consciously designed into the plan form of the Crescent, made the early expansion of the two original hotels quite simple. However, the provision of modern sanitary conveniences was constrained by the split level section and many of the rooms were as a result compromised. The character of the interiors remains vulnerable to potential future sub-division which may, to some extent, be inevitable if a viable use is to be found for the buildings. Unique features, such as original bed alcoves with their powder closets, survive on the two upper rear floors. Wherever possible, however, layout of the original walls and floors and earlier alterations should be retained and examples of important rooms conserved.

- CI1.1 Retain the segmental layout of the lodging houses and remainder based on the original staircases.
- CI1.2 Retain the spatial integrity of a representative number of the first floor front rooms including the Prayer Room.

- CI1.3 Encourage the reinstatement of missing hallways and staircases to the ground floor within a sustainable scheme for reuse of the building.
- CI1.4 Retain the form and layout of historically significant internal walls and any surviving evidence of historic internal walls which have been removed in the past.
- CI1.5 Retain and repair surviving historical and architectural features, such as doors, fanlights, cornices, bed alcoves and joinery.

**Policy CI:** To minimise disturbance to the historic fabric caused by the construction of new work.

**Reason:** Recognising that work is required to adapt the building to viable new uses the historic fabric should, wherever possible, be preserved.

- CI2.1 New work shall be of reversible, lightweight construction respecting plasterwork and joinery profiles where practical.
- CI2.2 Original features to be retained in situ and preserved behind new construction if practicable.

**Policy CI3:** To preserve the 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations and decoration to the ground and first floor reception rooms.

**Reason:** Enlargement of the St Ann’s Hotel resulted in the need, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for larger reception rooms. This led to the creation of new rooms on the ground and first floors of the West Pavilion. These rooms have good examples of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century plaster and internal decorative work, and show an important evolutionary stage in the history of the Crescent whilst demonstrating its inherent internal flexibility. Some photographic evidence exists of the design of some of the chimney pieces.

- CI3.1 Retain the reception rooms to the ground floor and the John Carr Room and the Gentlemen’s Smoking Room to the first floor of the West Pavilion.
- CI3.2 Retain and where necessary reinstate plasterwork, Lincrusta, joinery and mirrors.
- CI3.3 Research the design of the chimney pieces and install new chimney pieces of an appropriate scale, period and quality.

**Policy CI4:** To conserve the surviving features and original internal arrangements of cellars and attics.

**Reason:** The cellars and attics of the Crescent have provided useful service accommodation in the past for the varied uses of the building throughout its history. Due to the cramped headroom in the cellars and the difficulties with safe fire escape provisions from the attics it is likely that the use of both sections of the building will be restricted, thus leaving the spaces vulnerable to neglect. The historical significance of the cellars and attics is sufficient to justify the protection of surviving features relating to their original uses.

- CI4.1 Any further alteration to the cellars and attics shall be kept to a minimum.
- CI4.2 Conserve the working range and wine stores in the East Pavilion.

CI4.3 Exercise care with cellar floors with regard to unrecorded or blocked springs or water courses beneath.

CI4.4 Conserve and repair original lime ash attic floors.

CI4.5 Investigate the feasibility of public access to limited parts of attics and cellars.

**Policy CI5: To allow the retention of certain later alterations to the Crescent, including those to the ground floor and, if desired, the lift shafts.**

**Reason:** The alterations, mainly in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, demonstrate the flexibility of the building as well as having the potential to provide important service needs because of the space which results

#### **THE PUMP ROOM**

**Policy PR1: To consider the adaptive reuse of the Pump Room in a way which will reflect its association with the natural mineral water.**

**Reason:** The Pump Room was purpose built for the partaking of the Buxton natural mineral water. It is desirable that its future use, if possible, reflect its original purpose as advised by PPG 15.

**Policy PR2: To repair the exterior of the Pump Room and reinstate the original roof construction**

**Reason:** Both from the Slopes and the interior of the Crescent, the Pump Room is looked down upon with its flat roof being entirely visible. The design and quality of the roof is therefore of considerable importance in the townscape. The Pump Room is the focal point of a number of views of the Crescent which the present roofline does little to enhance and which, from the slopes, (which were designed as a vantage point), is jarring and unsightly. The reinstatement of the cupolas will not only replace an important and highly visible feature of the original design, but will improve the architecture of the roof as seen from the Slopes, clearly conceived by Currey. Stonework and stained glass windows both require some repair and conservation, the latter also being vulnerable to vandalism.

PR2.1 Research the original form and detail of the two cupolas and, if sufficient information survives, accurately reinstate them in appropriate materials.

PR2.2 Provide an appropriate new roof covering and lantern lights, bearing in mind the visibility of the building from the upper floors of the Crescent and from The Slopes.

PR2.3 Conserve stained glass windows and protect with discrete window guards respecting the character of openings.

**Reason:** Lack of maintenance, weather intrusion and the high humidity of the thermal springs have all contributed to decay of the internal finishes. Reintroduction of the warm mineral water in the well may revive the problem.

PR3.1 Repair, and replace where necessary marble, alabaster, plasterwork, glazing and joinery. PR3.2 Repair the inscriptions on the nature of the source and the stained glass representation of the Roman Goddess Arnemetia.

**Policy PR4** To permit no physical sub-division unless it can be accommodated without detriment to the character of the interior of the building.

**Reason:** The Pump Room was designed as a single large open space. The likely needs for independent servicing makes the building vulnerable to sub-division which should, if possible, be confined to the front entrance lobby area.

PR4.1 Make provision for services to enable it to be put to beneficial use.

**Policy PR5.** To consider on its merits the alteration of the front façade to enable the Pump Rom to be given a viable use or to reflect some or all of the character as first built, i.e. as an open arcade.

**Reason:** Apart from the loss of the cupolas, one of the most significant alterations to the Pump Room was the enclosure of the front arcade in 1912. The present position of the doors is not part of the original Henry Currey design and might possibly be relocated if this is necessary to achieve a viable use for the building.

PR5.1 To allow some alteration within the existing bays on the front elevation to facilitate to a viable use.

#### THE SETTING

**Policy S1:** To preserve and improve the visual amenity and historic character of the setting of the Spa Buildings through careful consideration of the design and servicing needs and of the need for new features and considering where possible enhancing the area through the removal of inappropriate features and materials.

**Reason:** The importance of the setting of the Crescent was recognised by both the Fifth and Sixth Dukes of Devonshire in their decisions to landscape St Ann's Cliff/ The Slopes. Little accurate information remains about the immediate environment of the Crescent, but the needs of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the motor car now dominate the forecourt, although there is a landscaped central island with a three-tiered fountain constructed in the 1960's.

Since the clearance of much of the inferior 19<sup>th</sup> Century additions to the rear of the Crescent, first in the early 1970's then in the early 1990's, the rear of the building has been exposed to public view, as originally intended. The open land resulting is the only position in which the building's accommodation could potentially be expanded. This would prejudice views of the rear of the Crescent and is the only available land for on-site car parking and servicing, which would need to be screened.

The gloomy passage alongside the Natural Baths needs upgrading to benefit both users of the footpath and those wishing to access the old dining room area.

S1.1 Specify appropriate new surface treatments for the forecourt, roadway and pedestrian areas which reinstate the visual amenity of this single open space and are commensurate with the needs of pedestrian and vehicular access.

S1.2 Consider the means of minimising parking in and vehicular access to the forecourt.

S1.3 Limit public parking in The Crescent roadway.

S1.4 Consider the need to retain, replace or remove the fountain and landscaped island as a townscape feature.

S1.5 Provide screening to the rear perimeter of the curtilage with appropriate walling, railings or landscaping.

S1.6 Consider measures for managing public pedestrian access in the forecourt, arcade and passageway.

**Policy S2: To ensure that alterations or extensions do not have a detrimental impact on significant views of the buildings.**

**Reason:** Located on the river valley floor, the Crescent's front façade can be viewed from an elevated position on The Slopes to the south. Its sizes and height make it visible from several other angles where it dominates the smaller and lower adjacent buildings. That visibility was greater still when the Crescent was first built and its continued dominance is appropriate. However, it is vulnerable to any proposals for expansion and development which may occur in the vicinity of the building.

**Policy S3: To devise a co-ordinated strategy for external lighting of the Spa Buildings.**

**Reason:** Public lighting, both external and within the arcade has been discreet and appropriate and reference is made in policy CE3 above to the existing lanterns fixed to the Crescent. If new uses are to be found for the Spa Buildings, it will be important that the immediate area will have a sense of life and vitality, particularly at night. Lighting within the arcade and on the street will need to respect the importance of the historic site whilst contributing to its overall security and viability. Consideration will need to be given to whether or not the temporary floodlighting should be retained or replaced.

S3.1 Carry out a full technical lighting study.

S3.2 Consider either period or discreet modern fittings.

**Policy S4: To minimise advertising on and around the buildings.**

**Reason** Due to lack of need for much in the way of commercial signage, the buildings has to date escaped largely unscathed, although there were at one stage coloured neon signs on the outside of the St Ann's Hotel. Recent repair works allowed the removal of the remaining redundant hotel signs. The possibility of several commercial occupants in the future means that caution is needed to avoid a plethora of discordant new signs whilst at the same time recognising the need to respond to the commercial needs of any business occupying the Spa Buildings.

S4.1 Identify uses which do not conflict with the unified appearance of the arcade.

S4.2 Allow advertising at ground floor only.

S4.3 Prepare a design guide for the display of advertising in and around the Spa Buildings.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Management and Decision Making**

The management of the Spa Buildings and their setting is currently the responsibility of the two local authorities, High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council, as property owners and as planning, tourism and highways authorities. The intention is that the buildings' management will become the responsibility of a charitable Building Preservation Trust to be established by the two authorities. This will have the preservation of buildings as its sole object and will apply all income to their preservation.

In practice, through the terms of a long lease, the Trust may delegate the day to day management of the buildings to a developer via the terms, of an underlease. As part of the terms of the underlease, any decisions affecting the conservation aspects of the building will be the responsibility of the developer in consultation with High Peak Borough Council as local planning authority and with English Heritage where appropriate. Decisions affecting the Conservation Area and the Listed Buildings, whether subject to statutory controls or not, will be taken in consultation with the conservation sections of High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council will, through the lease to the Building Preservation Trust, have the final say in critical decisions affecting the Spa Buildings.

Decisions on other immediately adjacent buildings and landscape outside the scope of this Plan (the Old Hall Hotel, the Cavendish Arcade, The Square and The Slopes) will be considered in the context of their roles in relation to the Spa Buildings, in conjunction with their owners and managers.

**Policy MD1: To ensure mechanisms are in place to enable decisions to be taken for the proper management of the Spa Buildings.**

#### **CONSERVATION PLAN**

This conservation plan will be adopted by the High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council and English Heritage. Following adoption, this Conservation Plan will become the guidance document for the management of the significance of the 'core' Spa Buildings and will need to be reviewed to reflect increased knowledge of the significance of the place and any changing requirements of the Spa Buildings.

**Policy CP1:** To review the Conservation plan every five years and update as necessary.

#### **CONSULTATION:**

This plan has been prepared by High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Trevor Osborne Property Group Limited and Monumental Trust Limited in response to a request from English Heritage. The options for the development of the Spa Buildings will be judged against the policies in the Plan which must hold good for the future, subject to the periodic review. The specific proposals will of course be subject to the normal statutory controls and published Government policy guidance.

Any strategy for the Spa Buildings and the surrounding landscape will need to co-ordinate a number of different bodies involved in using, managing and caring for the area. Local groups such as the Buxton Chamber, Buxton and District Civic Association, the Buxton Group and Brighter Buxton and other will be valuable consultees.

**Policy CON1: To involve partners, interested parties and the local community and business interests in decisions over the future of the Spa Buildings.**

#### **ACCESS**

None of the Spa Buildings were designed for wheelchair access or for access for those with other disabilities. Full access should be achieved, wherever possible, for both visitors and people working in the buildings. The Crescent poses particular problems because wheelchair access from the front cannot be achieved without lowering thresholds to overcome level difference, with a consequent change in the proportions of the doorway. Both practical and listed building considerations may mean that wheelchair access to all parts of the buildings may not be feasible.

**Policy A1:** To promote public access to the Spa Buildings

AI.1 Identify uses for the Ballroom and Pump Room which will enable public viewing.

**Policy A2:** To ensure seemly disabled access which is sympathetic to the design and historic fabric of the buildings.

A2.1 Provide a variety of means of access including ramps, lifts etc within the constraints of the historic fabric and ensuring equal intellectual access and/or alternative experiences where physical access is not possible.

The dominant position of the Spa Buildings at the centre of Buxton, and their long association with the Spa, excites considerable public interest both in the fine qualities of the Crescent itself and in its associations with Buxton Mineral Water. Recognising the overriding need to secure a long term sustainable use for the buildings, it is important that public access should be accommodated particularly for the main features of interest including the Ball room, the Pump Room and the source of the mineral water.

## **INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION**

Although a number of excellent books on local history appear in the bookshops, there is a little publicly visible information about the Spa Buildings in the town. There is no structured interpretation by way our tours, an exhibition or other or other means to link the constituent elements of the spa – the Natural Baths the Crescent, the Pump Room and the Thermal Baths (now the Cavendish Arcade), The Old Hotel and the Devonshire Royal Hospital – leading to the impression that everything evolved from the building the Crescent rather than from the presence and use of the warm spring waters many centuries before.

**Policy IE 1: To improve the public awareness of the spa buildings, their origins, functions and history**

IE 1 Create a permanent exhibition within or near to the Crescent of material relating to the Spa Buildings.

IE 1.2 Develop proposals for the most effective means of interpreting the social, economic and architectural history of Buxton to reach as wide a public as possible by using modern interpretative techniques such as audio-tours.

IE 1.3 Consider how the interpretive measures can best provide curriculum support for schools and colleges.

IE 1.4 Provide, if possible, educational programmes embracing all age groups, income levels and disabilities.

## **ARCHAEOLOGY**

The archaeological assessment of the area now occupied by the Spa Buildings (Appendix 4) has shown that it is reasonable to suggest that the area, including the Slopes, could have contained evidence of a Roman Settlement similar, though probably smaller in scale, to that at Bath. The structures uncovered during the building of the Crescent certainly indicate a bathing establishment which at least would be second only to Bath in Romano-British archaeology.

Part of the site of the Natural Baths is built on 18<sup>th</sup> Century infilling of old gully that carried the main road across the Wye (before it was culverted). Therefore it is entirely possible that the archaeology of that area remains intact below this.

There also exists the possibility that some Mediaeval and later remain, particularly water management systems, may exist in the area of the former Roman Baths. However, care needs to be taken during any archaeological investigation to protect the natural mineral water source.

**Policy ARC1:**

**To carry out any archaeological investigations in accordance with the Code of Practice and agreed standards and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and according to a scheme of work agreed with the Country Archaeologist and English Heritage.**

The construction of the Spa Buildings is likely to have disturbed or destroyed some remains. Others may lie preserved below the buildings. There is a potential in the future for damage to archaeologically important remains in the basement of the Natural Baths and at the rear of the Crescent where ground disturbance may occur.

**Policy ARC2:**

**Prior to any proposals to alter, extend or demolish parts of the Spa Buildings or excavate within the area, an assessment, where necessary followed by an evaluation, will be undertaken to ensure a full understanding of the impact of proposals on the archaeological significance of the site and buildings.**

ARC2.1 Preserve in situ any nationally important archaeological remains which survive and if possible permit their public presentation.

ARC2.2 Do not permit any development of areas which may justifiably be considered to directly cover archaeological areas without their prior archaeological investigation.

**Recording**

The Conservation Plan points to a number of features where alteration or demolition may be considered. Wherever possible, the aim will be to avoid damage or loss through careful design. Where this is not possible, recording is necessary to ensure long term understanding of the Spa Buildings and their evolution.

Policy R1 To record any part of the Spa Buildings in advance of alteration or demolition.

R1.1 To record any part of the Spa Buildings in advance of alteration or demolition.

R1.1 Records to be on the basis of a full measured survey to at least RCHME Level 4

**Maintenance and Alterations**

The repair and maintenance of historic buildings requires a high degree of knowledge of the history of the building and of traditional materials and detailing. Poor standards of repair have endangered the buildings in the past and will do so in the future if maintenance is not planned and managed correctly.

**POLICY MAA1** To make any decisions on the repair and maintenance of the fabric of the buildings, their alteration and their settings in the light of appropriately qualified professional advice and a full understanding of the architectural history and archaeological potential of the site.

MAA1.1 Ensure that future users are aware of this requirement and that a management structure is created that can sustain proper and regular maintenance.

MAA1.2 Employ contractors experienced in working on historic buildings.

### **Future Development**

The uses and business which will occupy the Spa Buildings need to respond to changing circumstances to ensure they not only remain economically viable but are capable of generating the income necessary to maintain the buildings. Changes to the uses will be reviewed in terms of the impact of any consequential developments or increase in any aspect that may be detrimental to the conservation and management of the significance of the Spa Buildings

**POLICY FD1** To find suitable uses for the Spa Buildings which will ensure their long term protection and upkeep.

### **Heritage Impact Assessment**

In developing proposals for revitalising the Spa Buildings and its curtilage it is necessary to go through a process of ‘risk assessment’ which identifies the impact of the proposed scheme on the visual, architectural, archaeological and historical significance on each and every part of the buildings and which also identifies ways in which this impact can be minimised.

POLICY IA1 To assess the impact of proposed uses upon the long term architectural and historic character of the Spa Buildings.

### **Environmental and Ecological Benefits**

The need to employ sustainable policies, wherever possible, is now well recognised. Where compatible with the historic and architectural qualities of the buildings, ecologically sound practices will be considered, including the possible use of the warmth generated by the thermal springs. However, it must be recognised that a number of practices may be incompatible with the architectural and historic quality of the Spa Buildings.

**POLICY EE1** The investigation and implementation of viable opportunities for environmental and ecological benefit should be carried out throughout the project.

EE1.1 Incorporate within new construction wherever possible sustainable resources, and energy efficient solutions.

EE1.2 Consider the viability and impact on the historic fabric of the installation of a heat recovery system.

EE1.3 Consider the impact of incorporating energy saving and other environmental measures on the architectural and historic character of the building.