



"Dr. Alister MacKenzie Designed Course"

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The Planning Inspectorate,
Temple Quay House,
Temple Quay,
Bristol BS1 6PN

3rd July 2015

Outline Planning Application Cavendish Golf Club

Dear Sirs

The Board and members of Cavendish Golf club are writing this support letter to explain why we believe our planning application for Outline planning permission for residential development on the land bordering Manchester Road, Buxton is important to the Club and will provide real value to the community in Buxton. We also want to express our concern and disappointment at the conduct of the area planning meeting.

Rationale for the Development

As we submitted in our original support letter to the planning committee Cavendish Golf Club has been an integral part of sporting and community activity in Buxton over the 90 years since it was created by the patronage of the Duke of Devonshire in 1925. The course was designed by the renowned Dr. Alister MacKenzie who also designed The Augusta National Golf Course in Georgia USA. Indeed Cavendish has been recognised as one of the finest courses in England and attracts many golfers to Buxton and the general High Peak area

Cavendish recognises the need to increase the use of the Club and to ensure that it continues to provide sporting and social resources for Buxton and the wider High Peak area. Cavendish has always encouraged young players and has developed subsidised introductory and development programmes in Golf. Nationally young people taking up golf have fallen by 45%. The Club is increasing efforts to expand membership and involve even more local people. Future plans under consideration also include efforts to bring younger people into the club and attract members who might not naturally see themselves as members of a Golf Club. These plans extend beyond the traditional activities of a Golf Club and require time, and most importantly investment, to be fully

developed. An example of the possibilities being considered by the Club to bring in younger members and attract a wider section of the community is foot golf <http://www.ukfootgolf.com/> a sport which attracts a younger audience and which can be completed in less time than traditional golf.

However, the boom in the building of Golf Clubs in the last 20 years and the development of greater opportunities for sport and social involvement has put financial pressure on all golf clubs and Cavendish is no exception to this. The financial situation of Cavendish is not strong and to fund these developments Cavendish have had to make a choice between preserving the course as it is and raising cash through disposals. We want to maintain the fabulous community asset that is Cavendish Golf Club, but we also want to make sure our club is financially strong and relevant to our modern society. This is why we have applied to develop some of the land on the margins of the course so we can fund our development without detracting from our main purpose.

The shape of the proposed development is driven by the need to preserve the course as originally envisaged by Dr MacKenzie and ensure that we do nothing that could detract from the course or which might risk putting off visitors to the area. The Outline Planning Application takes account of the Golf needs and ensures we can retain the course as it was originally envisaged e.g. there is a generally accepted distance of 60 metres between centre of the fairway and course boundaries we have used 80 meters.

We understand that the appeal will be considered in the context of the substantive planning factors set out in the attached submission, but we also consider that the context for our application as set out in this covering letter is relevant and important. We believe the plans submitted will ensure the survival of a long standing community asset and the development will provide the funds to expand the social and sporting opportunities in Buxton and High Peak. Our expectation is the extra revenue generated by the additional activities will greatly strengthen the financial security of Cavendish and ensure its survival. Without the development we do not have the funds to invest in the new plans and we will not generate extra income in the future, there is a real risk a long standing sporting asset could be lost to the community.

Concerns with the conduct of the planning meeting

At the meeting on June 2015, we were given an opportunity to present a challenge to the recommendation by the planning Officer, to reject our application. Our major concern with the planning meeting was the lack of discussion of the substantive arguments we raised.

Our application was rejected on two main grounds, which were:

1 The development represents an inappropriate encroachment and urban intrusion into an area of Countryside and Special Landscape.

The "Local Plan Options Consultation for Housing in the Buxton area" included this site for potential residential development but with a much larger area, over twice the size. Indeed it was that inclusion that encouraged the Golf Club to think of developing the land in a way that would not impinge on our main value to the community, which is the provision of a sporting facility for golf. In 2013 we discussed with the HPBC our initial thoughts, given their inclusion of our land in the Local Plan Options. We were therefore very surprised and dismayed with the response of a Councillor, who led most of the discussion on the application at the Planning Committee meeting planning meeting, to a question from a committee member on whether the area had been included in the Local Plan Options Consultation. The Councillor stated she had been involved in the Local Plan Options Consultation and our land was never a serious inclusion; she described it as merely a "whim". This seems an extraordinary way to describe an officially published document of the HPBC. Her statement had a great impact on the other Councillor members, many of who were new members and acted to suppress any further discussion of the arguments we presented.

Another Councillor asked whether the objection on the grounds of intrusion had been looked at on site by the planning officers or discussed with the National Park. The planning officer answered that no objection had been received from the National Park and that the impact had only been looked at from a distance, which we took to mean from a map. In fact and contrary to the information provided to Councillors, the development can only be seen at two positions from the Peak Park (Burbage Edge and Macclesfield Road) both a substantial distance away. In any case Cavendish Golf club would insist the proposed development was sympathetic to and fitted in with the landscape.

2 The development did not secure any affordable housing.

As High Peak does not have an accepted local plan, our application tried to meet the requirements of both the existing plan and the future intention of the proposed local plan. Under the existing local plan developments under 0.5 hectares are not obliged to provide affordable housing our development is 0.54 hectares and we offered to reduce the development area below 0.5 hectares. Under the proposed local plan developments 5 units or less are not required to provide affordable housing our development is 4 houses.

As with our earlier arguments on the impact of our proposal, we feel that there was no discussion or consideration of our points at the planning meeting. It was evident that there was a pre-agreed position with an appointed spokesperson to ensure discussion did not take place.

We hope that you will agree that the additional housing this development brings to High Peak, although makes a small contribution is nevertheless important,

particularly when the proposed local plan is still short of the required housing stock.

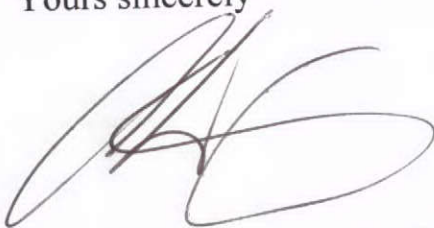
In closing this covering letter, we want to stress the benefit to the High Peak community of the sporting facility the club provides and the need to ensure the future of this valuable community asset for residents of High Peak.

As custodians of the tradition of Cavendish Golf club and it's nearly 100 years of local service we would not support or allow any development that damaged the landscape of our club or the surrounding area.

We are confident that you will consider carefully the substantive planning arguments set out in our appeal. We hope that you will support our appeal and enable us to proceed with a sympathetic development which has a minimal impact on area of land, provides much needed housing stock and also ensures the continuation and development of Cavendish Golf Club as a community asset.

We would welcome any further questions you have about our plans.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'AD', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Alan Doig Chairman for Cavendish Golf Club

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