

A – General Comments

1. Pedestrian connectivity seems well thought through.
2. Outward facing residential block structure is good practice. The use of a Linear Grid settlement pattern is proposed with an Irregular & Organic edge, both of which are characteristic of the High Peak according to the HPBC Residential Design SPD (chapter 4).
3. The general principles of the primary street, secondary streets, a lane facing the existing PRoW, and a loose outward facing green edge suited to the topography works well. Though details on the character of each street in relation to its hierarchy is lacking in the Design and Access Statement (254), these have been described by the applicant's design team at the Microsoft Teams meeting held on 24 July 2023. As such, it is understood that a key characteristic of the primary street is that it is tree-lined (as it should be to be in accordance with NPPF paragraph 131) via the use of tree pits set within 3m wide footpaths. However, the landscape drawings (301-305) show much less of these in comparison to the colour layout (251) and proposed site layout (260). Since the landscape drawings would take precedence over the other layouts, it is worrying that these key street design features are not being shown. It may simply be a case of adding/ repositioning trees, so this may not prevent an overall acceptance being granted, but a condition should certainly be provided to ensure that at a minimum of 10no. street trees (20no. total) are planted in tree pits centre of footpath for each of the east-west streets that form the primary street (i.e. plots 17-24 and plots 37-46) as these are essential for the street character design. Simply planting some in verges next to corner plots (e.g. as at plot 80) is not acceptable as this does not provide the same effect. As part of or in addition to the condition on the number of street trees, a condition should also be given for the detailing of the tree pits themselves showing root barriers, and a landscape management plan provided. This would be to ensure that these essential street trees are not simply value engineered out later and that these newly planted trees are planted correctly and managed sufficiently going forward to ensure that they reach their full maturity. It would also be advisable to provide a condition that deals with the ongoing retention of private trees that are planted in front gardens, particularly those for plots 9-17 and 46-51, as these also form part of the primary street character.
4. Positioning dwellings to face the western boundary with its green edge and cycleway is a logical solution that provides good natural surveillance of this new movement route. The pinch point of the green link at plot 32 still seems unnecessarily tight thus diminishing the appearance of a connected green link. However, the landscape masterplan (301) shows that with appropriate planting this area can be acceptable.
5. Use of corner turner dwellings, and the additional fenestration to the sides of plot 1 and the Chinley apartments facing POS, is welcomed.
6. End of street focal building vistas seem to have been achieved throughout.
7. The use of the stone walling and grey roof tiles described in the materials plan (258) is appropriate, as is the use of anthracite grey architectural detailing and windows. The use of stone door/ window headers and sills is welcomed*.
8. Generally, the proportions and subdivisions of casement windows is suitable for the High Peak.
9. Providing stone walling to the sides of rear gardens facing the public realm is good practice and welcomed*. Boundary treatment details (306) and their distribution shown on the boundary treatments plan (307) are acceptable. The addition of a drystone wall on the eastern edge is appreciated.
10. A commitment to replanting the engineered slopes is welcomed as this will, in time, provide a visual screen of the rear gardens/ acoustic fence on the northern edge. A maintenance plan for the landscaping here should be conditioned to ensure this new planting reaches maturity.
11. The layout now shows footpaths to front doors which is an improvement. There may still be some head height clashes with the porch canopy framing. A condition showing how this detail works would be advisable.
12. The hardstanding plan (256) shows that a lot of tarmac will be used. It would be preferable to break this up with areas of block paving within adoptable roads, though it is understood that there may be conflicts with Highways on this issue. The use of block paving and resin bound gravel is welcome as long as these contrast sufficiently with the tarmac*.
13. The street scenes (263) are generally acceptable. The Chinley apartments with its features acting as a focal building at the top of the hill of the site entrance works well. Along with the storey heights plan (262), the street scenes show that the 2½ storey dwellings look a little out of place with the rest of the street design. It would have been preferable to have grouped 2½ storey dwellings using a logical design rationale. However, given the limited number of these, they are not likely to detract significantly from the overall design. There are some reasonable level changes between adjacent dwellings along the street scenes. A condition should be given covering the materials and details for these level changes. Slab on edge is not acceptable. Small height natural stone walls to match the dwellings would be appropriate. Some of the detailing does not match the notes on the materials plan but this is insignificant at this scale.
14. The site sections (308) show some significant level changes between rear gardens. On section A-A part 1 and D-D, there are some retaining walls. A condition should be given for the detailing of these with the material for the dressed finish of these walls subject to later approval – a natural stone like the walling stone used for dwellings would be preferable, or gabions using a similar coursed natural stone frontage*.

15. Apart from the amenity distances plan (248), there doesn't appear to be any clear indication of the back-to-back distances. According to the HPBC Residential Design SPD, these distances should be a min. of 21m and increase by 1m for every 0.5m level change (see para 8.6.1). It is up to HPBC if it chooses to relax these for this application, though it would help if the applicant had added worst-case dimensions to the proposed site layout with indication on level changes across the block, especially since there does not appear to be an engineering levels drawing with FFL's at this stage.

** Material samples should be approved by HPBC via condition or otherwise to ensure that the quality of materials proposed is adequate for the High Peak. Locally sourced natural materials are always preferred over artificial materials given their longevity and proven suitability for the area. The specifications in the materials plan (258) are all acceptable, except for the garage door and front door frame, neither of which should be black or white.*

B – House Type Comments

All windows and doors should use a checked reveal detail whereby there is a 'punched out' appearance to the façade, so as to be in accordance with the HPBC Residential Design SPD, paragraph 6.3.6. This should be secured via a planning condition such as requiring the provision of 1:20 detail drawings of doors and windows.

1. When reading the Chinley apartment drawings (265 and 266) alongside the colour layout (251), it is good to see that the side elevation facing POS has additional fenestration. There are no windows provided to the opposite side elevation, but if this is deemed acceptable from a secured by design perspective by others then it is otherwise a good use of a focal building for the site. The use of chimneys is welcome, but a condition should be given for the detailing of these to ensure that they are built of the same material as the walls below, and not 'stuck on'.
2. The Peppercorn house type is deemed inappropriate for the High Peak given the prominence of the garage door, which should be subservient to the elevational design, and its use of a hipped roof (see HPBC Residential Design SPD paragraphs 5.6.1 and 5.12.2). Perhaps a condition could be used to ensure that this house type is swapped with something else if it is too late to do so now.
3. It is good to see a commitment to providing some M4(2) compliant dwellings. How this will be ensured needs clarifying and perhaps a condition given to demonstrate how this standard is being met, perhaps alongside an endorsement from the local building control or an approved inspector that states they are satisfied that these do comply to this standard.

There are no additional comments to make on the house types except to say that the house type drawings (and street scenes) do not match the materials plan (258) notes. It is assumed that the materials plan takes precedence, but a condition should be given to ensure this is so.