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Application Reference No. : HPK/2025/0444 Site Address: Land Behind Sumner Street Glossop Derbyshire SK13 8DP
Comments by: Andrew Brassington

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Submission: Objection

Comments: FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION PK/2025/0444

Land Behind Sumner Street, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 8DP

Erection of 30 No. Garages

Date: 7 December 2025

INTRODUCTION

I write to formally object to the above planning application on multiple grounds relating to highway safety, overdevelopment, residential amenity, heritage impact and inadequate technical assessment. The proposal represents an unacceptable intensification of use that fails to meet the requirements of the High Peak Local Plan 2016 and raises serious concerns regarding public safety.

HIGHWAY SAFETY AND ACCESS DEFICIENCIES

The main flaw in this application is the wholly inadequate access arrangement, which creates a cascade of safety concerns that render the proposal unacceptable. The access route via the alleyway between properties measures only 3.2 metres wide at the entrance, narrowing further to 3.05 metres at the sides of adjacent houses, with the width remaining just over 3 metres at its widest points. These dimensions fall significantly below the standards required for two-way vehicle movements, yet the applicant proposes to serve 30 garages generating potentially 60+ vehicle movements daily through this single constrained route.

The inadequacy of this access is compounded by the loss of what was previously a secondary access point from Shaw Street. Since the approval of HPK/2006/0576 and HPK/2010/0257, properties 17 and 19 Sumner Street have extended their gardens across this former access, eliminating it entirely and leaving only the narrow alleyway between numbers 19 and 21 Sumner Street. This loss of the secondary access fundamentally changes the site's accessibility compared to previous permissions and concentrates all vehicle movements through a single, substandard access point, creating conflicts that the original development with two access points was designed to avoid.

The confined dimensions of the access lane mean that vehicles will be unable to pass each other, necessitating reversing manoeuvres either back down the full length of the access lane or onto Sumner Street itself. Given that the access lane is of considerable length and accommodates only single-file vehicle movement, vehicles meeting within the lane will inevitably require one to reverse the entire distance, potentially into the path of passing traffic on Sumner Street. This risk is heightened by the absence of any separation between the lane and adjoining properties, creating the risk of collision with boundary walls when reversing in such confined spaces. Photographic evidence taken on a typical weekday demonstrates that cars regularly park legally on both sides of Sumner Street adjacent to the access entrance, further constraining the already narrow access width and making navigation difficult even for single cars, let alone larger or longer vehicles.

The application fails entirely to demonstrate adequate visibility splays at the junction with Sumner Street. Even if white lines were extended, private gardens exist on either side of the access which could accommodate tall vegetation that would obstruct sightlines. Some of this vegetation is outside the applicant's control, and no mechanism is proposed to maintain clear visibility in perpetuity. The applicant has provided no technical assessment of visibility splays against Manual for Streets standards, nor any justification for why substandard visibility would be acceptable for a development generating such significant vehicle movements. This omission is particularly concerning given that reversing manoeuvres from the access lane onto Sumner Street would be commonplace, requiring drivers to reverse into traffic without adequate visibility.

Sumner Street itself is a narrow residential road ill-suited to accommodate the traffic generation from 30 garages. The application provides no assessment of the capacity of Sumner Street to accommodate additional traffic, junction capacity at connections to the wider highway network, cumulative traffic impacts during peak periods, or effects on existing on-street parking and residential access. This is a critical omission, as the intensification from the previous 14 garages to 30 represents more than a doubling of vehicle movements being concentrated onto a street that already experiences parking constraints and traffic conflicts.

The absence of separate pedestrian provision creates additional safety hazards. All pedestrians using the garages, including vulnerable users such as children and elderly persons, would be forced to share the narrow vehicle access lane with no refuge or visibility of approaching vehicles. This presents an unacceptable safety risk given the constrained dimensions and lack of visibility through the access route, particularly when vehicles are reversing back down the lane having met another vehicle travelling in the opposite direction.

The application drawings appear to show inadequate turning provision for the last two garages in the development, raising questions about how vehicles accessing these garages would be able to turn and exit in a forward gear. If these vehicles must reverse back down the entire length of the site, through the access lane, and potentially onto Sumner Street, the safety concerns are further magnified.

The application fails to comply with Policy S1's requirement for safe communities and minimisation of hazards. No Transport Statement, Transport Assessment, or swept path analysis has been provided to demonstrate that the access arrangements are safe or suitable. This absence of technical justification is unacceptable for a development of this scale and intensity, particularly given the documented constraints and the loss of the secondary access that previously served the site.

DEMAND, AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The question of demand is central to assessing whether this intensification is justified. The applicant has provided no evidence to justify the need for 30 garages or to demonstrate that such provision would be utilised. The previous 14 garages had "fallen into disrepair and were largely unused," raising fundamental questions about why those garages failed to attract users and what has changed to create demand for more than double this number. Without evidence of demand, the proposal risks creating a permanent eyesore that generates all the adverse impacts of vehicle movements and activity without any corresponding benefit.

The impact on residential amenity from 30 garages would be severe and unacceptable. The properties adjacent to the access lane have no separation or buffer from vehicle movements, meaning that residents would experience constant interruption from vehicles passing within metres of their homes and gardens. The proposed 30 garages would generate significant noise and disturbance through vehicle engine noise from up to 60+ daily movements, door opening and closing sounds from 30 garage doors, and extended periods of disturbance during early morning and late evening hours when garage users depart for or return from work.

The proximity of the proposed development to residential properties is particularly concerning given the topography, where vehicles would be at a higher level than some gardens. This means that residents would experience not only noise intrusion but also headlight sweep across their gardens, light pollution from vehicle headlights, and fumes affecting air quality. The potential for damage to boundary walls from reversing vehicles in the confined access lane space adds a further dimension of concern, as does the loss of quiet enjoyment of properties and gardens that residents are currently entitled to expect.

These impacts are inextricably linked to the overdevelopment of the site. Had the proposal retained the previous scale of 14 garages, or proposed a modest increase with corresponding improvements to access arrangements, the impacts might potentially have been acceptable. However, the doubling of garage provision through a single inadequate access creates a concentration of vehicle movements and activity that is fundamentally incompatible with the residential character of the area and the amenity of neighbouring properties.

These impacts fail to meet Policy S1's requirement for "a high standard of amenity for all existing occupants" and Policy EQ6's requirement that development "does not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, noise, or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity." The intensification also fails to demonstrate how it would provide a "healthy, safe and attractive living and working environment" as required by Policy S1, given the noise, disturbance, air quality, and light pollution impacts on existing residents.

HERITAGE IMPACT AND CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER

The site lies within the St James Conservation Area and is directly opposite the Roman Catholic Church of St Mary Crowned, a listed building. The applicant has submitted a Heritage Statement which fundamentally fails to address how the scale and intensity of vehicle movements would impact the character and setting of these heritage assets.

Policy EQ7 requires development proposals in Conservation Areas to demonstrate how they take account of distinctive character and contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment. The Heritage Statement asserts that 30 garages would have "a positive impact" on the Conservation Area, but this entirely fails to address the central issue: the concentration of up to 60+ daily vehicle movements through a single narrow access within a tranquil residential conservation area.

The St James Conservation Area is characterised by traditional Pennine stone buildings and a quiet residential character. The proposal to generate such intensive vehicle activity represents a fundamental change to the area's character that is wholly inconsistent with its designation. The previous development of 14 garages, served by two separate access points, distributed vehicle movements in a manner that was less harmful to the Conservation Area's tranquil character. Doubling the number of garages whilst losing one access route concentrates all this activity through a single point, creating levels of traffic movement and associated noise, disturbance, and visual intrusion that are incompatible with the special character the Conservation Area designation seeks to protect.

The harm to the setting of the Roman Catholic Church of St Mary Crowned arises directly from this intensification of vehicle movements. The Heritage Statement provides no assessment of how constant traffic through the narrow access adjacent to the church, with vehicle engine noise, door activity from 30 garages, and general comings and goings throughout the day and into evening hours, would affect the tranquil setting appropriate to a place of worship. This represents a clear failure to discharge the statutory duty under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to preserving the setting of listed buildings.

The Heritage Statement's claim that the development would enhance the Conservation Area by removing parked cars from streets fundamentally misrepresents the heritage balance. Even if on-street parking were reduced (which is entirely unproven), this would not justify introducing intensive vehicle movements that would cause demonstrable harm to the Conservation Area's residential character and the listed building's setting. The application fails to comply with Policy EQ7 and statutory heritage duties.

ECOLOGICAL AND ARBORICULTURAL DEFICIENCIES

There is evidence that bats currently forage on the site, with roosts identified in the adjacent church. However, no ecological impact assessment has been submitted despite bats and their roosts being protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The development would result in loss of foraging habitat, whilst increased lighting from 30 garages and associated vehicle movements could disturb bat activity patterns. The church roost is immediately adjacent to the site, making the potential for disturbance particularly acute.

Thirty garage doors opening and closing, combined with vehicle headlights and any external lighting associated with the development, would create light spill and disturbance across a wider area than the previous scheme. The concentration of this activity through a single access route passing close to the church roost further increases the risk of disturbance to protected species.

Without proper ecological assessment, the application cannot demonstrate compliance with Policy EQ5, which requires development proposals to "identify local ecological networks and support their establishment and protection." The failure to submit any ecological assessment represents a fundamental deficiency that should result in refusal, or at minimum a requirement for comprehensive ecological surveys and mitigation proposals before determination.

Similarly, whilst the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment notes the presence of trees on site boundaries and two trees within the site, no Arboricultural Impact Assessment to BS5837:2012 has been submitted. The application therefore fails to identify which trees would be affected, quantify impacts on tree health and longevity, demonstrate adequate protection measures during construction, or address effects on largely third-party trees beyond the applicant's control. The intensification of the development increases the pressure on the site and the likelihood that trees would need to be removed or would suffer harm during construction and subsequent use of the garages. This deficiency prevents proper assessment of the proposal's landscape and ecological impacts and represents a further failure to provide the technical assessments necessary to determine the application.

DRAINAGE DEFICIENCIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

The application provides no adequate drainage strategy despite the fact that thirty garage roofs will generate substantial surface water runoff that must be properly managed. The access road and garage approaches require comprehensive drainage infrastructure, not merely soakaways which may be inadequate for the volume of runoff generated, could lead to surface water flooding affecting neighbouring properties, fail to meet sustainable drainage principles, and may not be viable given site conditions and existing drainage infrastructure.

The proposal increases the impermeable area and associated surface water runoff, making adequate drainage provision critical. Soakaways alone would be unlikely to cope with the volume of water generated during heavy rainfall events, particularly given climate change projections for increased rainfall intensity. Without a proper drainage strategy demonstrating connections to Sumner Street drainage systems with appropriate attenuation, or a comprehensive sustainable drainage system with evidence of its viability and long-term maintenance arrangements, the risk of surface water flooding affecting neighbouring properties is unacceptable.

The application fails to demonstrate compliance with Policy S1's requirement to mitigate climate change through appropriate sustainable development. The absence of any drainage strategy, combined with the intensification of impermeable surfaces and the lack of any sustainable drainage measures, represents a failure to properly consider climate change adaptation and the increased flood risk associated with more intense rainfall events.

CONCLUSION

This application represents overdevelopment of the site with wholly inadequate supporting information. The proposal to more than double the garage provision from 14 to 30 whilst simultaneously losing one of two access routes creates a concentration of development and vehicle movements that is fundamentally incompatible with the constraints of the site, the capacity of the access arrangements, the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, the character of the St James Conservation Area, and the setting of the adjacent listed church.

The applicant has failed to provide fundamental technical assessments that would be necessary to properly determine this application, including a Transport Statement or Assessment with swept path analysis and visibility splay drawings, Heritage Impact Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Impact Assessment to BS5837:2012, and comprehensive drainage strategy. The absence of these assessments prevents proper evaluation of the proposal's compliance with the development plan and represents a fundamental failure to discharge the burden of proof that rests with the applicant.

The proposal fails to demonstrate compliance with Policies S1, EQ5, EQ6, and EQ7 of the High Peak Local Plan 2016, and fails to discharge statutory duties in relation to the setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The previous scheme of 14 garages appears to have failed due to lack of demand and fell into disrepair and disuse. The applicant has provided no evidence to demonstrate that doubling this provision would result in a different outcome, raising the prospect of substantial harm to highway safety, residential amenity, and heritage assets without any corresponding public benefit.

I respectfully request that this application be refused. Should the Council be minded to consider approval, I request that comprehensive technical assessments addressing all the deficiencies identified above be secured and subject to public consultation before any determination is made. However, given the fundamental constraints of the site and the loss of the secondary access, it is difficult to envisage how the intensification proposed could ever be made acceptable, regardless of the quality of technical assessments subsequently provided.

Andrew Brassington

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