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From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
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To: Planning Comments (HPBC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories: [REDACTED]

Application Reference No. : CON/2025/0060 Site Address: Millers Dale Station Unnamed Road From Glebe Farm To B6049 Millers Dale Derbyshire SK17 8SN Buxton Comments by: cheryl ashton

From:

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Submission: Objection

Comments: FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Proposal: Millers Dale Station Car Park Extension and Third Cycle Hire Centre

PDNP Planning Reference: NP/HPK/1125/1163

Derbyshire County Council Planning Reference: CON/2025/0060

Reasons for Objection

1. SSSI Protection

The proposed development is located within a triple-protected Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This area requires the highest level of environmental protection, and the proposed development threatens its sensitive ecological status.

2. Ecological Impact

There is a clear need to protect the ecological integrity of this area. Any increase in visitor numbers will have a significant and potentially irreversible impact on wildlife, habitats, and landscape character.

3. Inadequate Sewage and Toilet Facilities

The existing public toilets, currently the only facilities along the trail, are already proving inadequate. They operate on a septic tank system which has already caused foul-smelling sewage issues.

There is serious concern that these facilities cannot cope with increased visitor numbers.

This matter should be formally investigated by the Environment Agency before any approval is granted.

4. Unsafe and Deteriorating Footpaths

The footpaths in Chee Dale Valley are rapidly deteriorating due to increased visitor traffic.

Many areas are now dangerous, poorly maintained, and in some sections nearly impassable.

This has already resulted in an increase in emergency (999) call-outs.

An ecological survey and a full health and safety assessment should be mandatory before any plans to encourage further visitors are approved.

5. Litter and Waste Problems

Litter and dog waste have become a serious problem along the trail and within the valley.

There is currently only one bin provided by the PDNP at Millers Dale Station, which is wholly inadequate. The absence of proper waste management has effectively turned large parts of the trail into a dumping ground.

6. Previous Assurances from PDNP

When the PDNP previously applied for planning permission for the goods shed at Millers Dale, we were approached for a letter of support. During those discussions, we were specifically assured that a third cycle hire centre would not be pursued, as it was agreed that two hire centres at each end of the trail were more than sufficient. We supported the application in good faith based on those assurances.

7. Impact on an Established Local Business

We are the owners of an established cycle hire business on the Monsal Trail, which was supported by PDNP and funded through a government-backed LEADER grant approximately 15 years ago.

The introduction of a third hire centre within 1.5 miles of our family-run business would be severely detrimental, likely resulting in loss of trade, job losses, and potentially the forced closure of our business.

8. Overcrowding and Conflict on the Trail

The proposed addition of 120 hire bikes to an already overcrowded trail is unreasonable.

Conflicts between walkers, cyclists, and horse riders are already common. Introducing a further 120 bikes would significantly increase these risks, particularly for people with disabilities and less confident users.

9. Duplication of Existing Services

The PDNP has stated that it intends to introduce disability bikes. This service is already provided by Hassop Station cycle hire.

Additionally, as a long-established business, we at Blackwell Mill Cycle Hire have worked for over 15 years with community support workers, scout groups, and schools to support disadvantaged children and vulnerable users.

10. Misuse of Public Funding

It appears this proposal is driven by a desire for short-term financial gain rather than long-term environmental and community protection. Funding would be more appropriately spent on improving infrastructure, maintaining footpaths, and preserving the protected status of this area.

Conclusion

The proposed development at Millers Dale Station would be detrimental to:

• the sensitive environment,

• the safety of trail users, and

• the sustainability of local businesses.

Encouraging increased visitor numbers through a third cycle hire centre and adding 120 more bikes would significantly escalate environmental, residential, and safety concerns.

However, we would support the development of a visitor education centre to inform the public about the importance of protecting and respecting this unique landscape.

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