

Affordable Housing Statement – Chatsworth Lodge, Buxton (General Needs Letting)

1. Introduction

This Affordable Housing Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the internal refurbishment and reconfiguration of Chatsworth Lodge, Carlisle Road / Park Road, Buxton, SK17 6XX. The existing building provides 28 bedsit and small flat units within a former Independent & Wellbeing (I&W) setting. The proposal will modernise the accommodation and convert the building into 19 larger self-contained 1- and 2-bedroom affordable rent homes (open-plan flats) for general needs letting.

Chatsworth Lodge is an existing retirement housing complex built in 1976. The flats are currently vacant as the existing unit sizes and layouts no longer meet modern standards and expectations for independent living. All previous tenants have been re-homed and the property is now empty awaiting refurbishment.

The refurbishment will improve internal layouts and space standards, enhance accessibility, and deliver energy efficiency upgrades to provide high-quality, long-term affordable homes.

2. Policy Context

This statement is prepared with reference to the High Peak Local Plan (2016) (including Policy H4 - Affordable Housing), the Developer Contributions SPD (adopted 2023), and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It also aligns with High Peak Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2025-2030, which prioritises: (1) increasing the supply of quality homes and affordable housing; (2) promoting homes that positively contribute to residents' health, wellbeing and independence; and (3) addressing sustainability and zero-carbon challenges in new and existing housing.

3. Existing Site and Need for Improvement

The building currently contains small bedsit-style accommodation that no longer meets modern living expectations or space standards. Demand for supported/I&W bedsit accommodation has reduced, while there is increased need for larger self-contained affordable homes. The proposal will bring an existing empty affordable housing asset back into use and improve the quality, accessibility and energy performance of the accommodation, supporting the Council's Housing Strategy 2025-2030 priorities, including

increasing the supply of quality affordable homes, improving health and wellbeing outcomes, and tackling sustainability and fuel poverty through retrofit.

4. The Proposal

- Refurbishment and internal reconfiguration of the existing building to convert 28 units into 19 self-contained 1- and 2-bedroom flats (open-plan layouts).
- All units will be provided as affordable rent homes for general needs letting (100% affordable).
- Works will modernise layouts, improve space standards and accessibility, and enhance energy efficiency alongside upgraded communal areas.

5. Affordable Housing Justification

All 19 units will remain affordable rented homes. The shift from an I&W retirement model to general needs letting responds to current housing demand and enables the building to continue to provide affordable housing in a format that meets contemporary needs. Although the number of units reduces, this reflects the amalgamation of very small units into fewer, larger homes designed to meet national space and quality expectations, improving long-term sustainability and resident wellbeing.

6. Planning Obligations & Viability

Given the scheme's 100% affordable housing tenure and refurbishment-based nature (with no market housing element), it is anticipated that the Council's primary requirement will be to secure the affordable tenure and management/letting arrangements, rather than seek an additional affordable housing contribution. Any planning obligations, if required, can be agreed through the determination process.

7. Conclusion

The proposal will deliver 19 high-quality, general needs affordable rent homes by modernising and retrofitting an existing vacant asset. It directly supports High Peak Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2025-2030 priorities by improving the supply and quality of affordable homes, supporting residents' health and independence through better standards and accessibility, and addressing sustainability through energy efficiency upgrades.