

[REDACTED]

From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
Sent: 19 June 2026 11:03
To: Planning Comments (HPBC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

[REDACTED]

Application Reference No. : HPK/2026/0228 Site Address: Spring Shopping Centre & Land South of Station Road
Buxton Derbyshire Comments by: Eleanor Louise Ives
From:

Buxton

Phone:

Email: [REDACTED]

Submission: Objection

Comments: I wish to register my objection to application HPK/2026/0228 in its current form.

Firstly, I would like to state that I support the principle of investing in and regenerating this important part of Buxton town centre. The Springs Shopping Centre has been in need of improvement for some time, and I recognise the opportunity this site presents to enhance the appearance, vitality and long-term future of the town.

However, having reviewed the application documents, I have significant concerns that the proposal does not deliver the type of regeneration that many residents were led to expect when the project was first announced as a £100 million revitalisation of Buxton. Whilst there are positive aspects to the scheme, the proposals appear to be heavily weighted towards residential development, with 332 flats forming the dominant element of the project.

Given the scale, prominence and importance of this site within Buxton, I believe there are a number of issues that require much greater consideration before planning permission is granted. My concerns relate to the impact on existing businesses during construction, parking and transport pressures, the lack of meaningful community infrastructure, uncertainty regarding local employment benefits, the suitability of some aspects of the design, and whether the development genuinely delivers long-term benefits for the wider population of Buxton and the High Peak.

My detailed comments are set out below.

1. Concern Over the Balance Between Regeneration and Residential Development

The project has been widely promoted as a £100 million town centre regeneration and revitalisation scheme.

However, the submitted application appears to be primarily a residential development, delivering 332 flats, with supporting commercial uses rather than a transformational town-centre regeneration project.

Residents were led to expect significant investment in facilities, attractions, services and infrastructure that would strengthen Buxton as a destination town.

There is insufficient evidence that the development will enhance Buxton's long-term role as the principal retail, leisure and service centre for the High Peak.

The proposal risks replacing an existing shopping centre with a predominantly residential neighbourhood.

2. Impact on Buxton's Retail Economy and Existing Businesses

The construction phase is likely to extend over several years and affect a significant portion of Buxton town centre.

Existing businesses could experience reduced footfall and loss of trade during construction.

Reduced accessibility, parking disruption and construction activity may deter visitors, shoppers and tourists.

No clear strategy has been presented to protect existing businesses from economic harm during the development period.

The proposal should demonstrate how it will maintain the vitality and viability of Spring Gardens throughout construction.

3. Parking Concerns

The development introduces 332 new homes into the town centre.

Buxton is not a major city with extensive public transport options, and car ownership remains essential for many residents.

Many households are likely to own one or more vehicles.

The cumulative impact of residents, visitors, workers and customers on parking demand appears underestimated.

Concerns remain regarding:

Loss of existing public parking provision.

Long-term pressure on surrounding streets.

Visitor parking.

Parking for customers using town centre businesses.

The proposal should provide robust evidence that parking demand can be accommodated without harming the wider town centre.

4. Public Transport Limitations

The proposal appears to rely heavily on sustainable transport assumptions.

While Buxton benefits from rail and bus services, public transport remains limited compared with larger urban areas.

Many surrounding villages and rural communities have infrequent services and are affected by weather.

Residents are therefore likely to remain heavily dependent on private vehicles.

Transport modelling should reflect the realities of living and working in a rural market town.

5. Construction Traffic and Contractor Parking

Concerns exist regarding construction traffic accessing the site through the town centre.

There is no clear indication of where construction workers will park.

Without dedicated arrangements, contractor vehicles may occupy public parking spaces relied upon by businesses, visitors and residents.

A detailed Construction Management Plan should be required before any approval is granted.

6. Local Employment and Skills Opportunities

The application refers to economic benefits and job creation.

However, there is limited detail regarding:

The number of jobs to be created.

The types of jobs.

Whether jobs will be permanent or temporary.

Local recruitment commitments.

Given the scale of the development, the scheme should provide:

Local apprenticeship opportunities.

Traineeships.

Work experience placements.

Local labour agreements.

Support for local contractors and suppliers.

Priority should be given to local tradespeople, particularly those with traditional building and stoneworking skills that reflect Buxton's heritage.

7. Heritage and Design Concerns

Buxton possesses a unique architectural character based on limestone, gritstone, Victorian architecture and civic grandeur.

Some of the proposed buildings appear generic and could be located in any modern urban development.

There is concern that elements of the scheme do not fully reflect the distinct character and heritage of Buxton.

Greater emphasis should be placed on:

Local materials.

Traditional craftsmanship.

Architectural features inspired by Buxton's historic townscape.

High-quality design that enhances rather than dilutes local identity.

8. Lack of Meaningful Community Infrastructure

The proposal includes flexibility for uses such as bars, restaurants and a cinema.

However, Buxton already has a significant number of food and drink establishments as well as a cinema.

There is little evidence that these uses address the community's most pressing needs.

Consideration should instead be given to facilities that provide lasting benefit to residents and the wider High Peak.

9. Missed Opportunity for Wider Community Benefit

A development of this scale should deliver substantial community infrastructure alongside housing.

Potential facilities that would provide wider public benefit include:

Athletics facilities.

Indoor sports facilities.

Leisure and recreation provision.

Youth facilities.

Community and cultural spaces.

Training and education facilities.

Affordable workspace for local businesses and start-ups.

The application should demonstrate how it contributes to the long-term social wellbeing of the wider High Peak population, not solely future residents of the development.

10. Affordable Housing Concerns

The application seeks to justify a reduced affordable housing contribution through viability arguments.

Given the scale and significance of the development, this should be subject to rigorous independent scrutiny.

There is a risk that the scheme delivers substantial market housing while failing to meet local affordable housing needs.

Any reduction in affordable housing should be transparently justified and independently assessed.

Conclusion

I support the principle of regenerating this important town centre site.

However, I believe the current proposal places too much emphasis on residential development and insufficient emphasis on community benefit, infrastructure, local economic resilience, heritage, parking provision and meaningful regeneration.

I respectfully request that these matters are fully addressed before any planning permission is granted.

Do you really need to print out this Email? Be green - keep it on the screen.

This email is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive, privileged or confidential information that could be protectively marked. If you are not the addressee please do not use the information in any way. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. Thank you.

The Council may be required to disclose this email or any responses to it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The way in which we handle personal information is set out in our privacy notice and is available at <https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/YourData>
