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From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
Sent: 21 June 2026 13:20
To: Planning Comments (HPBC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

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

From:

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Submission: Objection

Comments: I object to Applications HPK/2026/0228 and HPK/2026/0229 on the basis of: over-development; financial viability; environmental considerations; parking; traffic; effect on the conservation area; lack of consultation; long-term disruption; disabled access; detrimental effect on the local economy.

Over-development: the number of residential properties has grown at every stage - from less than 100 to 327, less than 30 of which will be classed as 'affordable'. This is a huge number for a small town centre and will dominate and irrevocably change its nature: Buxton will become a dormitory town for Manchester (the proposed rents will be out of reach of locals).

Financial viability: this project has already received over £11 million of public money. I understand that it will require further public funds in the form of a grant from Homes England. In return for this money we, the public, will have no assets to show for it, and will actually lose utility in the form of residents parking. It looks like public funds are being used to subsidise a property developers profit driven project.

Given the location of the proposed development, it seems likely that things of archaeological interest will be uncovered, yet there has been zero mention of this. Has provision been made for the delays and extra costs this would result in? Given that this project is not financially robust, will the public be required to put more money into the scheme to cover the cost of 'unforeseen' contingencies?

Environment: why has HPBC decided that an EIA is not required? Given the size of the development (well in excess of the 150 residential units which generally triggers the requirement for an EIA), and its proximity to the river, why is one not required? HPBC has given us no explanation for this, not even a screening opinion on whether one is obligatory, let alone best practice.

Parking: In its press releases, HPBC stated that the development made the additional parking next to the station necessary. I understand that there are considerable obstacles to the use of that area as a car park, including access across existing parking areas; alterations to the Palace Road and Station Road junction; excavation of land adjacent to a steep embankment; potential impacts upon protected trees and the creation of a new vehicle route where pedestrian access currently exists.

Buxton's economy depends on tourism, visitors and people from surrounding towns and villagers coming into town to shop. It is already difficult to find a parking space and the loss of so many parking spaces will have a devastating effect on the local economy (and deny people in surrounding areas access to the shops that Buxton offers). Even if

the additional parking near the station materialises, who will be prepared to wheel a trolley full of shopping or carry heavy bags all that way? We will almost certainly lose Waitrose (and with it the 'Waitrose Effect').

The developer claims that the new flat-occupiers will not have cars as they will use public transport. This is nonsense, Buxton has notoriously poor public transport provision. The occupiers will use the non-allocated parking spaces, reducing the number available even further.

Please note that the disposal of Buxton Town Hall will result in the loss of another 64 much used parking spaces.

Traffic: Station Road is already busy, with traffic often at a standstill. The proposed new car park near the station will make the situation even worse as the traffic is forced to stop to let people access the new car park. Is there a reason that HPBC have conspicuously not undertaken an assessment of this impact?

Effect on the conservation area: The High Peak Local Plan requires development to respond positively to local character and heritage assets, whilst the National Planning Policy Framework requires great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets and their settings. The design of this proposed development is completely at odds with the design and materials of the surrounding historic buildings.

Buxton is one of only two Roman spa towns in the country. This proposal would have Buxton's Roman baths swamped by overly tall, modern buildings of generic design.

The developer has paid lip-service to reflecting the history of Buxton, but the result is a sad sticking plaster on an inappropriate design - an example being the use of copper because the Cavendish family made money from copper. The design is generic, without any actual consideration given to the unique character of Buxton: it would be fine in a suburb of a city, but it is completely out of step with this town. The prominent use of their branding on the buildings is a good illustration of the way in which Capital & Centric's design lacks sensitivity and ignores Buxton's distinct characteristics.

The Planning Inspectorate have just upheld Peckham council's rejection of a planning application to turn a shopping centre into homes on the basis that it was 'overly domineering' and 'visually intrusive' - if the Planning Inspectorate regard that as grounds for rejection in south London, it is surely grounds for rejection in Buxton.

This is a missed opportunity - the Springs shopping centre should be improved, but sympathetically.

Lack of meaningful consultation: Were Capital and Centric the only option HPBC considered? I have seen no alternative designs. Staveley have completed a town centre regeneration for £6m (only slightly more than half of the public money HPBC has already spent) - "A new public square, pavilion building and play area for Staveley have been created with funding from the government's Towns Deal. Other work includes new CCTV, paving, lighting, seating, greenery and a sculpture created by artist Coralie Turpin, which features work from school children. The new pavilion will house Staveley Library on the ground floor and a business on the first floor." (BBC website). Buxton was never offered this sort of sensible option; we have simply been presented with this grandiose housing project as a fait accompli, which carries high risks, both financial and cultural.

There have been a couple of public meetings, which attendees have described as badly organised, with representatives of Capital and Centric who were either unable or unwilling to answer questions. Capital and Centric did not make clear the ever increasing number of flats and the reduction of retail space at any point.

Rather than reflect the concerns raised by residents, Capital and Centric have merely claimed that they have taken these concerns on board, but in reality have ignored them and doubled down on their own intentions, increasing the number of flats (and therefore their profits) at every stage.

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Long-term disruption: The developer expects disruption to last for 3 years - that assumes there are no unforeseen delays. This will drive out our existing retailers (who I understand Capital and Centric are declining to engage with or

to consider accommodating their needs (notably Next). Visitors and tourists will not come to a giant building site - further threatening the survival of our shops. Look what happened to Sheffield's city centre when it was dug-up for years for the trams.

There is no link made between the building of the flats and the completion of the retail / leisure facilities. What is to stop the developer from building the profit generating flats and dismissing the commercial and community elements as uneconomic?

Disabled access: The large number of steps are not user-friendly for people with mobility issue. Given the fact that Buxton experiences snow and ice for several weeks a year, they would be dangerous, making areas of the development inaccessible - not just for the disabled.

The lack of town centre parking will mean that people with mobility issues, locals and visitors, will be unable to access shops and the heritage sites.

The proposed station car park would require people to carry their shopping a fair distance up hill.

Local economy: Buxton's economy depends on tourism. Tourists come because of the beautiful period architecture. They will not be attracted to a town centre dominated by a modern high density housing estate.

People from the surrounding areas will stop coming into Buxton to do their shopping if parking is made this difficult.

Next is one of the main shops in Buxton, but Capital and Centric are declining to engage and accomadate their needs.

HPBC are trying to sell the idea of this project as being 'regeneration'. The fact that the development does not increase retail space, further demonstrates that this is primarily a housing development.

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