

Our Ref: BJ/KN0024/26

12 June 2026

Planning Department
High Peak Borough Council
Buxton Town Hall
Market Place
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6EL

via Planning Portal

Dear Sir / Madam,

**RE: Application for the subdivision of 38 Thornsett and 5/7 Riverside,
Birch Vale SK22 1AZ
Planning Portal Reference: PP-14979813**

We are instructed by Mellor Homes Limited to apply for:

“The subdivision of 38 Thornsett from a four bedroom dwelling to two x 2-bedroom dwellings and the subdivision of 5/7 Riverside from a three bedroom dwelling to two 1-bedroom dwellings, together with external alteration and the creation of 3 car parking spaces.”

In addition to this covering letter, application form and planning fee, the application comprises of the following:

- Location plan and Site plan Ref: 2539/G/308 Rev C
- 38 Thornsett Existing Floor Plans ref: 2539/G/309
- 5/7 Riverside Existing Floor Plans ref: 2539/G/314
- 38 & 38a Proposed Floor Plans ref: 2539/G/311 Rev B
- 5 & 7 Riverside Proposed Floor Plans ref: 2539/G/313 Rev A
- Existing Elevations ref: 2539/G/310 Rev A
- Proposed Elevations ref: 2539/G/312 Rev A

Site

The application site is located within the settlement of Thornsett, Birch Vale, High Peak. The site forms part of an established row of traditional stone-built cottages positioned directly adjacent to the



highway. The surrounding area is characterised by historic terraced and semi-detached dwellings, natural gritstone boundary walls, narrow lanes, and a close relationship between buildings and the street. The wider setting has a distinctly rural village character, with mature trees, sloping landform and views towards the surrounding High Peak landscape.

The principal building is a four-storey stone dwelling with a traditional pitched slate roof, stone chimney stacks and simple window and door openings framed by stone heads and cills. The front elevation faces the highway and provides two storeys above the road, with a small, enclosed frontage defined by a low stone boundary wall. The building forms part of a consistent group of vernacular stone properties which make a positive contribution to the local street scene.

To the rear, the site extends downwards from road level by two-storeys and is accessed from a lower level. The rear of the property is more enclosed and contains a private garden/yard area, stone retaining walls, with several outbuildings/garage structures which are outside of but mark the site boundary. The rear elevation reflects the steeply sloping nature of the site, with the building appearing taller when viewed from the rear due to the change in ground levels. The rear setting includes planted areas, stone walls and neighbouring residential properties, with a generally domestic character.

Planning History

The application site has a very limited planning history, with only one application on record, which is shown below:

- **HPK/2026/0095** - Certificate of Lawfulness for the existing use of 5 and 7 Riverside as single residential unit - Certificate of Lawfulness - Lawful (Approved) - 28/05/2026

Proposals

There are several elements of the application as follows:

1. The subdivision of 38 Thornsett from a single four-bedroom dwelling into two self-contained two-bedroom dwellings. This element of the proposal would make more efficient use of the existing building while retaining its residential use and overall form.
2. The subdivision of 5/7 Riverside from a single three-bedroom dwelling into two self-contained units each comprising one bedroom and a study area. This would increase the number of homes available on the site without changing the existing building footprint.
3. The subdivision of 38 Thornsett will require an external alteration to the front elevation with the addition of a front door. This will be formed in an identical form to the existing doors on the front elevation and would be limited in scale and designed to integrate with the existing appearance of the building.
4. The creation of three new car parking spaces on Riverside, to the east of the property but on land under the applicant's control, to serve the proposed dwellings at 5 and 7 Riverside as



well as 9 Riverside. The land in question is already laid with hardstanding, and so no physical works are proposed. This provision is intended to ensure that the development is appropriately served in parking terms and accords with the Council's adopted standards.

Relevant Planning Policy

The Development Plan comprises the High Peak Local Plan adopted in April 2016. Material policy considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024).

High Peak Local Plan (April 2016)

Policy S1 (Sustainable Development Principles) states *“the Borough Council will expect that all new development makes a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protecting, and where possible enhancing, the environment; and mitigating the process of climate change, within the Plan Area.”*

Policy S1a (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) sets out a number of sustainable development principles which all new development proposals should incorporate in order to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect, and where possible enhance the environment. As the proposals make use of a building already in residential use but increase the number of units it is considered that the development will meet the requirements of the policy.

Policy S2 (Settlement Hierarchy) directs development towards the most sustainable locations in accordance with the settlement hierarchy sets out in the policy. Thornsett is listed as a ‘Smaller village’ where limited development of an appropriate nature will be allowed. It is considered that the application proposal is of an appropriate scale.

Policy H1 (Location of Housing Development) is the strategic policy for the location of new housing development and promotes the effective re-use of land by encouraging housing development including redevelopment, on sites suitable for that purpose and supporting new housing development on unallocated sites within the built-up area boundary. As the site is located within the built-up area of Birch Vale/Thornsett, the proposal accords with the spatial strategy by reusing an existing residential site within an established settlement, close to services and public transport, and without encroachment into the countryside.

Policy H3 (New Housing Development) sets out a number of criteria in relation to new housing including addressing the housing needs of local people by providing a mix of market and affordable homes in different types and sizes to meet current and future needs, supporting sustainable, inclusive communities by reflecting local housing needs and the character of the existing area. The policy provides support for housing suitable for newly forming local households, such as first-time buyers or



smaller households and requires new housing to be flexible, adaptable, spacious, and accessible, meeting national space standards and accessibility requirements under Building Regulations Part M4(2).

Policy EQ 6 (Design and Place Making) requires that all development should be well designed and of a high quality that responds to both its environment and the challenge of climate change, whilst also contributing to local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Policy CF6 (Accessibility and Transport) states that the Council will seek to ensure that development can be safely accessed in a sustainable manner. The policy includes the criterion that development should not lead to an increase in on street car parking to the detriment of free and safe flow of traffic.

Assessment

Principle of Development

Chapter 11 of the NPPF relates to “making effective use of land” in which the Framework states that “Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.” Paragraph 125 expands further on this by listing factors what planning policies and decisions should do to achieve this goal. Part d) states the following:

“Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure);”

This application proposes the creation of two additional residential units, increasing the number that currently exist from four to six. This will help the Council meet the identified needs for housing in an effective way.

One of ways in which Local Plan Policy H1 seeks to ensure provision is made for housing is through:

“Promoting the effective reuse of land by encouraging housing development including redevelopment, infill, conversion of existing dwellings and the change of use of existing buildings to housing, on all sites suitable for that purpose”.

The application site presents a suitable opportunity to achieve a net increase of two dwellings in a sustainable manner which will result in an effective reuse of land in accordance with Policy H1.

Housing Need

According to the most recent published figure, High Peak has a 2.85 year’s supply of housing (ref: High Peak 5 Year Housing Land Supply – Interim Position Statement March 2025). This is below the minimum five year supply figure that Councils are required to achieve as set by the NPPF but is also a significant undersupply of housing.



In relation to this application, two additional dwellings will be created, which will help assist the Council to address this undersupply of housing.

Car Parking

Appendix I of the High Peak Local Plan sets out the Council's parking standards, which in relation to residential development are as follows:

Use Type	Standards	
Dwellinghouses (C3)		
1 bed dwelling	1.5 spaces per unit 1 cycle space per unit if no garage or shed is provided	
2/3 bed dwelling	2 bed – 1.5 spaces per unit 1 cycle space per unit if no garage or shed is provided	3 bed – 2 spaces per unit. 1 cycle space per unit if no garage or shed is provided
4+ bed dwellings	3 spaces per unit. 1 cycle space per unit if no garage or shed is provided	

In relation to 38 Thornsett, the subdivision of the existing four-bedroom dwelling into 2 two-bedroom dwellings would not alter the parking requirement for the site. There is no private parking for the property so cars are parked on street. Under the Council's parking standards, a four-bedroom dwelling requires three parking spaces, while each two-bedroom dwelling requires 1.5 spaces. As such, the proposed subdivision generates a requirement for three spaces in total. Accordingly, no additional parking provision is required in connection with this element of the scheme.

In relation to 5/7 Riverside, the existing three-bedroom dwelling would ordinarily require two parking spaces under the Council's standards. The proposal would subdivide the property into 2 one-bedroom dwellings, resulting in a combined requirement for three parking spaces. Although the existing dwelling does not currently benefit from designated parking, the application identifies a parcel of land within the applicant's control, shown on the site location plan, which can provide three dedicated parking spaces to serve 5 and 7 Riverside and also 9 Riverside.

Therefore, having regard to the information submitted, the proposed development is considered to accord with Local Plan Policy CF6.

Space Standards

Policy H3 part e) requires adequate internal space standards to be achieved for new dwellings in accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS). The proposed floorplans provided with the application set out the internal floor areas and achieve the NDSS minimum standards as demonstrated in the following table:



Unit	No. of Beds	NDSS Minimum Requirement	Proposed GIA
38 Thornsett	2	70sq.m	76.89sq.m
38a Thornsett	2	70sq.m	73.04sq.m
5 Riverside	1	58sq.m	62.45sq.m
7 Riverside	1	58sq.m	61.80sq.m

Amenity Space

The proposed site plan identifies how amenity space will be provided for the 4 proposed residential properties as well as No.9 Riverside.

For 38 and 38a Thornsett the existing garden area to the side of the property (indicated in green on the site plan) will become a shared amenity space, accessed as existing from road level via steps.

For 5 & 7 Riverside the existing terrace area in front of the properties will provide an amenity space for each property.

The proposal will not give rise to any significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life of neighbouring dwellings, nor will it to future occupiers of the proposed houses. The amenity space will be safe and will complement the built form of the site and surrounding area. The development will also have no adverse harm on visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or adverse impact on local character and amenity. Therefore, according with Policy EQ6.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, the proposal represents a sustainable and efficient reuse of the existing residential buildings within an established settlement and would make a modest but meaningful contribution towards local housing supply.

The subdivision of the existing dwellings would provide additional homes of a size and type suited to local needs, whilst retaining the residential use of the site and respecting the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The limited external alterations are sympathetic to the host building, and the proposed parking provision ensures that the development can be appropriately accommodated. Having regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations, it is respectfully submitted that the proposal accords with relevant local and national planning policy and should be approved without delay.



Yours faithfully

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