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

Brown Edge Road
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Submission: Neither

Comments: Overall I am positive about this development. The architecture may not be to everybody's taste and there are details to be worked out, but Buxton needs to make better use of the land than ugly surface parking. Housing is needed, and having a dense, central mixed use development reduces urban sprawl. This not only benefits ecology by reducing incursion into green spaces, but it also means residents of new build properties don't find their homes further and further from the services and businesses on offer in the town centre. Compared to new housing estates further out of town this also benefits residents of existing homes as it keeps a check on motor traffic levels which would otherwise grow significantly. It benefits businesses in the town centre by placing customers closer to their doorsteps which in turn means high street businesses can be more diverse, catering for day time and night time economy in a compact area.

Most of my comments regard transport:

I'm generally OK with the car parking provision - relocating some and hiding some below buildings is the right approach in my opinion. This is intended to be a low car development, and for Buxton central ward this seems reasonable; households without a car or van are at 34.5% - above the national average of 23.5, and already 23.8% walk to work - way above the national average of 7.6% (ONS - 2021 census). Adding more parking capacity will only generate more traffic, which would result in more congestion and poorer air quality - a detriment to the health and wellbeing of residents and an impact on tourism.

However since some of the existing capacity will be used by new residents there is, as others fear, a net reduction in capacity. That might be offset by other measures in the application, but I wouldn't be able to support this application without provision the following within the application - some of these are within the direct scope of the application, others are highways and services related and so would require funding via a section 106 provision:

1) A review of the existing streets in and close to the centre to ensure parking restrictions are suitable to deal with potential increase in parking demand and that they are easily enforceable.

2) A plan for more visible and frequent parking enforcement action - funded through section 106 provision. If there are any red routes included in the outcome of the parking restriction review some of that enforcement could be by camera car.

3) Provision of dedicated car share spaces within the development AND funding for subsidies to ensure there is enough vehicle provision to make it viable and convenient.

4) Additional s106 funding for bus services to increase frequency and provide an early morning and evening timetable for services such as the Buxton Buzz and the 76.

5) Residential cycle parking to be changed from one space per dwelling to the national guidance from DfT of one per bedroom (Active Travel England - LTN 1/10, table 11-1). Whilst this is guidance, and the local plan is likely to be what the planning application is assessed against, for a low car development to be successful the guidance in LTN1/20 is there to be followed.)

6) Residential cycle parking also include accessible accommodation for non-standard cycles to cater for families and disabled people. Presently the plans appear to only include parking provision in small rooms, but these and the parking stands within need to be accessible for people with child trailers, adapted cycles, trikes, cargo cycles, legal eBikes and for people who are unable to lift their cycle into a two tier rack. Therefore a mix of cycle parking provision in a range of suitable secure locations needs to be incorporated into the plans in accordance with LTN 1/20 section 11.4 (including table 11-2) which contains recommended specifications and dimensions for storage. Note the cycle types and dimensions are all referenced in LTN1/20 figure 5.2.

7) Cycle parking should include an area where legal eBikes (by definition of the legislation on Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles - EAPC) can be charged, OR an assurance that eBike batteries can be charged in apartments. I know there are cases where landlords and insurers forbid this, but if C&C and HPBC are serious about this being a low-car development they cannot restrict people from using eBikes in a hilly town; uptake of cycling as an option for some journeys would be severely restricted. There needs to be a sensible and proportionate approach to mitigating fire risks as there is with any household and personal electronic devices.

8) Commercial cycle parking review: the proposal of 40 spaces for commercial use does seem good compared to the standard quoted. However national guidance is based on commercial unit size and not a proportion of car parking spaces. Using car parking as a metric when we know car parking will be restricted seems flawed. Therefore the proposed figure needs to be reviewed against DfT guidance in LTN 1/10, table 11-1 to ensure it meets or exceeds this. Details of commercial cycle parking also needs to be provided in the submitted documents for review.

9) Additional s106 funding for establishment of a cycle network to link areas of the town with the White Peak Loop (WPL) spine route and the C&C development. The application makes claims of the 30-minute cycle isochrone covering all of Buxton - whilst this is correct, there is currently no safe cycle infrastructure (apart from a very poorly implemented and obstructed shared cycleway on Manchester Road). It is not reasonable to assume a sufficient number of car trips can be offset by cycling under these conditions. The WPL spine route through the town centre will go past the development, however it needs to link up with other parts of the town. This does not necessarily mean cycleways everywhere, but the road and street network needs reviewing and a series of safe routes established with interventions included where necessary.

10) Footways and cycleways should be accessible and continuous. Although the WPL scheme is not part of the application, the Station Road section has been included in the plans and it interacts with the site at various points. The following issues need to be addressed:

a) Plans include dropped kerbs and tactile pavers to cross vehicle access points such as the car park - it is best practice for accessibility purposes to keep the footway/cycleway level across these points. Priority for pedestrians and cyclists should be maintained across these junctions, and to do so there may need to be junction set-back within the site.

b) The footway and cycle track should be separated. The pavement on Station Rd currently had limited footfall, but once there are pedestrian access points from the development this will increase and there will be more conflict - especially near the station where the crossing should become a parallel cycle crossing rather than a shared Toucan crossing.

c) Any crossing of Station Road should remain a controlled crossing as a minimum.

11) There needs to be a cycle link from the WPL to the development via New Wye Street - currently the boundary of the WPL cycleway stops at the crossing near McDonalds. Otherwise the only other safe and legal option to access the commercial premises of the site by cycle from Charles Street is an unnecessary detour via a slight climb of station road and (steep!) descent of Station Approach - and vice versa.

Other comments:

I haven't seen much in the documentation on materials specified for surfaces, however Spring Gardens is currently plagued with unsightly asphalt infills of stone pavers where utility work has been done, or where pavers have been damaged by vehicles. Where paving is specified it needs to be the type of installation that doesn't require specialist contractors to come to fix a temporary repair. For instance traditional block paving laid on sand is used in Dutch streets rather than bonded paving - whilst being able to support a small number of vehicles without damage, it can also quickly be lifted and immediately replaced for utility works without specialist equipment.

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