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From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
Sent: 20 July 2026 18:48
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: Julia Armett

From:
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Submission: Objection
Comments: Julia Armett

65 Macclesfield Road

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20/07/2026

Planning Department

High Peak Borough Council

Re: Objection to Planning Application HPK/2026/0228; Proposed Development of 340 Flats on Former Town Centre Car Park

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to formally object to the above planning application for the construction of 340 flats on the former town centre car park.

I believe this proposal would have a significant negative impact on the town centre, local businesses, road safety and the wider community for the following reasons:

Loss of Essential Town Centre Parking

The proposed development would result in the loss of a significant town centre car park that is currently relied upon by shoppers, visitors, workers and local businesses.

Whilst it has been suggested that replacement parking may be provided elsewhere, the proposal raises serious concerns regarding both adequacy and deliverability.

The scheme itself proposes approximately 200 parking spaces for 340 residential units, together with their visitors, deliveries and servicing requirements. This level of parking provision appears inadequate given the scale of the development and is likely to result in overspill parking on surrounding streets, increasing pressure on existing parking provision and creating further difficulties for residents, businesses and visitors.

In addition, the Council has referred to a proposed replacement car park on Station Road, Buxton. However, to date, no planning approval has been granted for this facility. Furthermore, there appears to be no completed and approved traffic flow assessment demonstrating that the site can accommodate additional vehicle movements safely and effectively.

It would therefore be premature to approve the loss of existing town centre parking based upon a replacement facility that has not yet secured planning permission and whose traffic impacts have not been fully assessed.

Even if a Station Road car park were eventually approved, it is situated a considerable distance from the town centre's retail area and the remaining supermarket. This raises serious concerns regarding its practicality, particularly for elderly residents, disabled users, families with young children and shoppers carrying groceries or other purchases. It cannot reasonably be regarded as an equivalent replacement for conveniently located town centre parking.

The loss of accessible parking is likely to discourage residents and visitors from using the town centre, reducing footfall for local businesses and undermining the economic vitality of the high street. This impact would be compounded by the proposed five-year construction period, during which parking availability, accessibility and visitor numbers are likely to be adversely affected.

As such, the proposal fails to demonstrate that adequate replacement parking will be available, accessible and operational, and therefore represents a significant risk to the sustainability, accessibility and economic vitality of Buxton town centre.

Increased Traffic Congestion and Highway Concerns

The proposed 340 flats would significantly increase traffic movements in an area that already experiences congestion and traffic management problems. The roads surrounding the site are already recognised as a particular trouble spot, and the additional vehicle movements generated by residents, visitors, deliveries and service vehicles would inevitably worsen the situation.

Of particular concern is the proposal to create an additional exit onto Station Road, an area that already experiences significant congestion and acts as a well-known bottleneck for traffic entering and leaving the town centre. The introduction of further vehicle movements at this location is likely to exacerbate existing delays, increase queuing traffic and create additional road safety concerns for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.

I am also concerned that this additional access point onto Station Road was not included in the original public consultation materials. Residents and businesses should have been given the opportunity to fully consider and comment upon all aspects of the proposed traffic arrangements from the outset. The omission of such a significant feature undermines confidence that the full traffic implications of the development have been transparently presented and properly assessed.

Furthermore, the anticipated five-year construction period would generate substantial construction traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, deliveries and contractor vehicles, adding further pressure to an already constrained highway network. This would result in prolonged disruption for residents, businesses and visitors and could discourage people from visiting the town centre altogether.

The cumulative impact of increased residential traffic, visitor traffic, construction traffic and the proposed additional access onto Station Road raises serious concerns regarding highway capacity, road safety, air quality and the overall sustainability of the development.

For these reasons, I do not believe sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the local road network can accommodate the scale of development proposed without causing significant adverse effects.

Harm to Buxton's Historic Spa Town Character, Conservation Area and Architectural Heritage

Buxton is a nationally recognised historic spa town whose unique character is defined by its Georgian and Victorian architecture, grand public buildings, historic streetscape and carefully planned urban environment. The town's architectural heritage is one of its greatest assets and contributes significantly to its identity, tourism economy and appeal as a place to live, work and visit.

The proposed development occupies a highly prominent location on the edge of a designated Conservation Area. As such, any development on this site should be of exceptional design quality and should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting.

The scale, massing, density and contemporary design of the proposed buildings do not appear to reflect or complement the architectural character that makes Buxton distinctive. Instead, the development risks appearing as an overly dominant and incongruous feature in a sensitive historic setting. Its size and appearance would have a significant visual impact on views into and out of the Conservation Area and could erode the character of the surrounding historic townscape.

Development in such a sensitive location should draw inspiration from Buxton's rich architectural heritage, using scale, materials and design features that respect the town's historic identity as a spa town. In my view, the proposal fails to achieve this and risks undermining the qualities that make Buxton unique.

Lack of Affordable and Social Housing

The application provides no meaningful social housing or genuinely affordable housing provision despite the scale of the development. Given the pressing need for affordable homes within the area, it is disappointing that a major development on publicly owned land appears to deliver little direct benefit to residents in housing need.

Inadequate Public Consultation and Significant Changes to the Proposal

I am also concerned about the adequacy of the public consultation process undertaken in relation to this application.

Meaningful consultation is essential to ensure that residents, businesses and other stakeholders have a genuine opportunity to understand and comment upon development proposals that will have a significant impact on their community. However, it appears that the scheme currently being considered differs substantially from that presented during the original consultation process.

Since the consultation took place, the proposal has been amended to include a greater number of residential units, reduced public and community spaces, and significant changes to the overall layout and design. Despite these substantial revisions, there has not been an equivalent opportunity for residents and businesses to comment on the revised scheme.

For all these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to refuse this application and instead pursue a form of regeneration that better reflects the needs, character and long-term interests of Buxton, its residents, its businesses and its visitors.

Conclusion

As a lifelong resident of Buxton, I care deeply about the future of our town and the legacy we leave for future generations. Over recent years, residents, businesses, community groups and volunteers have worked tirelessly to strengthen Buxton's economy, improve the town centre and promote Buxton as a historic spa town and visitor destination. Considerable effort has been invested in enhancing the town's reputation, supporting independent businesses and boosting tourism, all of which contribute significantly to the town's prosperity and identity.

For the reasons outlined throughout this objection, I believe this proposal represents the wrong development in the wrong location.

I am particularly concerned that this project is being presented as regeneration. True regeneration should strengthen a town's economy, support local businesses, improve public spaces, respect its heritage and provide clear benefits for local people. In my view, this proposal fails to achieve those objectives. Instead, it risks undoing much of the progress that has been made through years of hard work and community effort.

Regeneration funding presents a rare opportunity to invest in the future of Buxton. We have only one chance to ensure that this investment creates a lasting and positive legacy. That legacy should be a thriving town centre, a strong local economy, protected heritage assets, vibrant public spaces and a successful visitor destination that future generations can be proud of. I do not believe this development will deliver that vision. Instead, there is a real risk that it will set Buxton back years, undermining many of the achievements that local people have worked so hard to secure.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to refuse this application and instead pursue a form of regeneration that better reflects the needs, character and long-term interests of Buxton, its residents, its businesses and its visitors.

Yours faithfully,

Julia Armett

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