

[REDACTED]

From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
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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: Mark Dorett

From:

13
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Submission: Objection

Comments: I object to the Springs development on grounds of overdevelopment, the impact on the town due to the infrastructure, the economic impact and the lack of appropriate consultation and transparency concerning the scheme.

Concerning overdevelopment: in the original bid and the government requirement, this was for 75 residential units in the town centre. When Capital and Centric then spoke to councillors, the number rose to 180. This was already quite an increase from the original bid. The figure then rose again, this time to 250, and this is what was publicly displayed in the Springs Centre. This current planning application is for 327 flats and 5 town houses - excessive at nearly 4 and a half times the original bid.

The impact of this development is could be highly detrimental to the town of Buxton. I understand there has been no assessment of the impact of road and parking changes and no consideration of the impact on the shopping area. Key stores such as Next and Waitrose will be forced to relocate. Waitrose, in particular, will suffer by the reduction and relocation of parking. The loss of Waitrose will impact others as customers of Waitrose also visit other businesses. The lack of shopping will lead to customers going elsewhere; they are not going to struggle on public transport or walk further with heavy bags of groceries. If Waitrose were to close, there would also be the impact of the loss of jobs and the loss of a supermarket in the town centre for those who struggle to travel further.

There are currently 431 spaces around the Springs Centre, 26 of which are allocated to blue badge holders. The proposals reduce this to 266 - a decrease of 165. 120 of these spaces are being set aside by developers for residents in the new development, meaning that the total of onsite parking will be reduced to 146. There is also a greater impact on the proportion of disabled spaces.

The council solution to this has been to buy the DB Schenker land. However, as well as there not being planning permission to turn this into parking, it is also quite some distance from the town centre. This would require major

road changes to an area that is already under a heavy strain due to congestion. The distance will also disadvantage Waitrose and their customers, particularly the old and disabled.

Proposed changes to the road layout will also put a major strain on traffic flow, which is already often congested at this particular area. This will be detrimental to visitors, on which the town so heavily relies, as well as the residents of Buxton. The argument that people could and should make better use of public transport is very misguided; people use cars to transport heavy bags of shopping rather than trying to haul them on to public transport - again, it is the elderly and disabled who will find this particularly difficult. In any case, public transport links to the town are poor and unreliable.

It is hard to see who these apartments will cater for. These people will need to earn a good salary in order to pay the rent, and for this many will need cars - yet there will only be 120 allocated parking spaces. Travelling to Manchester or Sheffield by train is a possibility but is expensive; it is also often subject to cancellations and delays to an already long journey. It is difficult to understand where such residents will come from who will want, or be able to afford, this accommodation.

Buxton is famed for its rich heritage and history, which is evident by the beautiful and historical architecture. The imposing buildings planned, along with the Capital and Centric stamp and logo, certainly does not respect the rich architectural tradition of Buxton.

Finally, I am most seriously concerned about the lack of proper consultation and transparency surrounding this project. When the bid was made, the residents of Buxton had no idea that it was for essentially a residential development. This is not how it was presented to us at all. We were initially excited about the prospect of planned leisure facilities for the people of Buxton. People were concerned about the parking and the response was to actually significantly reduce provision for parking. The number given for residential units was incorrect and completely misleading. The time given for people to respond has been very short - which is again wrong - and many have struggled to open attachments, which has meant they have been unable to respond.

It appears that the whole process has lacked transparency. It seems that the majority of council updates have been verbal and confidential, with no record being kept. This goes against the business of the council to serve and look after the best interests of its residents. There have been meetings solely for the Labour group and the council itself is heavily invested in the proposals, which would indicate that the process has been neither impartial, fair or in the best interests of the residents of Buxton. It is disappointing and alarming that the project does not seem beneficial to the people of Buxton; in fact, quite the opposite - it seems to be detrimental to the welfare of the town.

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