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From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
Sent: 23 July 2026 00:14
To: Planning Comments (HPBC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories: [REDACTED]

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

From:
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Submission: Objection

Comments: I object to Planning Application HPK/2026/0228 ĩ The Springs Shopping Centre & Land, South of Station Road, Buxton as follows:

1. Parking Provision and Highway Impact

The scheme results in the loss of approximately 422 existing town-centre car parking spaces, only partially offset by around 200 replacement spaces proposed on the former rail depot site near the station ĩ a net reduction that is inadequate for both resident and visitor/tourist demand. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), parking provision adequacy and resulting impacts on highway safety and town-centre congestion are material considerations. Before any application decision, the proposed increases need to be tested rigorously against High Peak Borough Council's (HPBC's) own parking standards and submitted Transport Assessment.

2. Heritage and Conservation Area Impact

The amended proposed design, which includes tall, heavily massed residential blocks, is not in character with Buxton's Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian spa-town streetscape. It also sits within or adjacent to the Buxton's conservation areas. It is detrimental to their character and appearance. Consideration of impacts on conservation areas or the setting of heritage assets is a statutory consideration HPBC must make under the NPPF and section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. I ask that this objection on grounds of the design's negative visual and physical impact on the nature of Buxton's characteristic and historic buildings and their surroundings, as opposed to being in harmonious integration with them, be addressed alongside any assessments from Historic England, the Council's Conservation Officer, and Buxton Civic Association.

3. Housing Mix and Affordable Housing Provision

The development is overwhelmingly ĩbuild-to-rentĭ, with reportedly only around 5% of units offered at reduced/affordable rent. I believe this is not complementary with HPBC Local Plan's affordable housing policy and

housing mix requirements. The viability and policy-compliance of the affordable housing element requires to be formally and transparently assessed by officers before application decision.

4. Strategic Land Use and Safeguarding of Future Transport Infrastructure

The late proposal to commit station-adjacent land some distance away to car parking spaces of approximately 200 to compensate for loss of immediately-accessible spaces caused by the development could prevent or greatly limit future options for expanded rail facilities, given Derbyshire County Council's recent resolution supporting feasibility work on reinstating the Matlock-Buxton railway line. This is a legitimate material consideration regarding long-term compatibility with transport strategy, and keeping land available for reasonably foreseeable infrastructure needs. It should be fully assessed in that respect before this land use is set.

5. Loss of Retail/Commercial Floorspace and Town Centre Vitality

The reduction in retail and commercial floorspace and consequent impact of unsuitable relocation spaces being offered to businesses being affected e.g. unsuitable size (as may be the case with Next), needs to be visibly assessed against the NPPF's town centre "vitality and viability" tests and the Local Plan's retail hierarchy policy. Any potential closure of affected businesses as a consequence of the intended design must be avoided to prevent Buxton suffering economically through reduced commercial services being available to residents and visitors.

6. Impartiality of High Peak Borough Council

Since HPBC is apparently working with Capital&Centric as a partner in the scheme and not just as a regulator, this requires strong measures against any potential appearance of bias and, consequentially, as HPBC appears to be an "interested planning authority" under section 316 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires full responses to any relevant Freedom of Information requests regarding negotiations. Hence, the application, if not currently the case, should be determined by the full planning committee and not delegated to a few officers. Confirmation of consideration by the full planning committee by public statement is sought.

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