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From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
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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: Julie TaylorHSE

From:
20 Briar Close, Bu

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Derbyshire
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Phone: [REDACTED]

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Submission: Objection

Comments: I wish to formally object to planning application HPK/2026/0228 for the redevelopment of the Spring Gardens Shopping Centre and adjoining land south of Station Road, Buxton. The proposal includes the partial demolition of the existing shopping centre and the construction of residential accommodation, commercial premises, public spaces, landscaping and associated parking.

Whilst I support investment in Buxton and recognise the need to regenerate underused parts of the town centre, I believe this proposal is fundamentally flawed and should be refused for the following reasons.

The scale, design and overall appearance of the proposed development are entirely out of keeping with the character of Buxton. Buxton is a nationally recognised Victorian spa town with a unique architectural heritage and townscape. The proposed development appears overly dense and urban in nature and fails to reflect the distinctive character, elegance and historic setting that make Buxton unique. Given the prominence of the site in the town centre, the development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area and would undermine Buxton's identity as a historic spa town.

I am also concerned about the architectural style and materials proposed. Buxton is not an inner-city industrial location; it is a historic Victorian spa town renowned for its stone buildings, heritage architecture and attractive streetscape. The extensive use of modern red-brick architecture appears unsympathetic to the established townscape and fails to complement the aesthetic qualities that attract residents and visitors alike. This proposal represents a missed opportunity to create a truly distinctive development that respects and enhances the character of Buxton.

I have serious concerns regarding the loss of parking provision within the town centre. The existing parking facilities serving The Springs Shopping Centre and Waitrose are heavily used by residents, visitors and shoppers. The proposal would significantly reduce the amount of conveniently located parking available in the heart of Buxton. This is likely to discourage people from visiting the town centre and could have a detrimental impact on existing businesses and retailers.

The applicant's proposed replacement parking provision does not adequately address this issue. The proposed new car park is located too far from the main shopping area for many users, particularly elderly residents, people with mobility difficulties and visitors carrying shopping. Buxton has a significant population of older residents who rely on convenient access to town-centre services, and this proposal does not appear to properly consider their needs.

Furthermore, reduced town-centre parking is likely to increase pressure on surrounding residential streets as visitors seek alternative places to park. This could create additional congestion and inconvenience for local residents.

I am also deeply concerned about the significant disruption that will be caused during what is likely to be a lengthy construction period. The site occupies a key location within Buxton town centre and the demolition and redevelopment works are likely to create considerable noise, dust, traffic disruption and accessibility issues.

This disruption will inevitably affect existing shops, businesses and hospitality venues that are already operating in a challenging economic environment. Reduced accessibility and a diminished shopping environment could discourage visitors from coming into the town centre, reducing footfall and negatively impacting local businesses. There is a real risk that some businesses could suffer substantial financial hardship as a result of prolonged construction works in the heart of the town.

Tourism is one of the most important contributors to Buxton's economy. The town attracts visitors because of its Victorian heritage, spa-town status, historic architecture and extensive programme of cultural, national and international festivals and events. I am concerned that both the construction phase and the completed development could significantly damage the visitor experience.

The potential loss of convenient parking, the presence of a major construction site in the town centre, and a completed development that does not reflect Buxton's character may reduce visitor numbers and adversely affect tourism-related businesses. I fear that some of the nationally and internationally recognised festivals and events for which Buxton is famous could be jeopardised during the construction period and potentially beyond if the town loses part of its unique character and appeal.

I do not believe that the proposal sufficiently reflects the views and aspirations of local residents and businesses. Given the importance of this site, any redevelopment should be shaped by a genuinely collaborative approach that respects Buxton's history, character and economic needs. There appears to be insufficient evidence that concerns raised regarding design, accessibility, parking provision and the preservation of Buxton's unique identity have been adequately addressed.

I also have concerns regarding the practical delivery of a development of this scale and complexity. Before granting permission, the Council should be fully satisfied that the scheme can be delivered within a realistic timescale and without leaving a partially completed site that could have a detrimental effect on the appearance, vitality and economic wellbeing of the town centre. Similar regeneration schemes by Capita and Centric in other towns and cities have not always achieved their original vision, resulting in extended construction periods, changes to approved proposals and financial impacts on local communities.

Finally, given that High Peak Borough Council is a partner in bringing forward the redevelopment proposals, I ask that particular care is taken to ensure the application is assessed transparently, objectively and with full regard to the concerns of residents, businesses and other stakeholders so that public confidence in the planning process is maintained.

Buxton is a unique historic market and spa town. Regeneration should enhance and celebrate its special character, not replace it with a development that could be found in any modern city centre. In its current form, I believe this proposal fails to respect the town's heritage, threatens accessibility and parking provision, risks harming local businesses and tourism, and could have a lasting negative impact on the character of Buxton.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that High Peak Borough Council refuse planning permission for application HPK/2026/0228. At the very least, significant amendments should be required to ensure that any redevelopment is more sympathetic to Buxton's historic character and provides adequate, conveniently located parking and accessibility for residents, shoppers and visitors.

Thank you for considering my comments. I ask that this objection be formally recorded and taken into account during the determination of this application.

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