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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: David Patrick Green

From:

7
Paxton Place
Burbage
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6WE

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Submission: Objection

Comments: For purpose of clarity my view is very much pro development of the area with the associated investment this brings - but I sadly cannot say that of this development proposal which does not feel consistent with the designs and scale of earlier consultation. Given the significant changes, most notably regarding size, mix and quality of materials, I feel there is a case for argument that the consultation is invalid and progression would therefore be against the spirit of all that was consulted upon. This simply does not feel like the right scheme to create a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Before further comments I would also like to question whether this proposal should be considered by HPBC themselves, as there appears to be a conflict of interest? Given HPBC's investment in the scheme and influence to date it feels more appropriate that this proposal should be assessed externally by MHCLG. I believe this would not only have the benefit of being independent, but also be transparently so, with the decision therefore more likely to be accepted and less likely to cause further division within the town.

Most obviously the proposal seems to have changed from being a town-centre regeneration project to a housing scheme, such is the increase in the number of residences. Furthermore the residences created do not feel like what Buxton needs, with them largely being small apartments offered on a rental basis, not family homes. The amount of affordable housing is low, which seems unfair given this development is of a scale that it will change the town so much. I further question whether 5 storey buildings are appropriate although I can imagine the developer will suggest this is essential to make the scheme viable - although we cannot comment of this as there is insufficient detail in the application. Buxton attracts residents and tourists who support the economy due to its historic nature, but this feels at risk of being destroyed. What evidence is there of the need for this? Where was this suggested in the consultation, which feels merely like lip-service as it stands.

One also has to question the infrastructure supporting the housing. Car parking feels limited, whilst routes to the station are unclear. I'm a huge fan of public transport, but Buxton's services and connectivity make it virtually impossible to live without a car. The lack of car parking will be a further threat to tourism and many existing retail businesses. I understand car parking has been based upon data, but it appears to be flawed or skewed.

Materials for the project appear to have been down-graded from earlier suggestions, which will result in a more brutalist appearance, out of keeping with the town and its aspirations. Moreover, green roof-spaces, a great feature of earlier suggestions have largely disappeared. These are crucial spaces given Buxton's landscape where they will be key views from many areas of the town. In a rural town I would question whether concrete is the best choice (it seems rather dominant) or simply the cheapest? I also note there is little in the way of green initiatives eg solar panels, swift bricks, green living walls etc. Why is this if HPBC claim they want to improve biodiversity and the natural environment?

It is a further concern that many images from earlier schemes are being used in the consultation, suggesting more green measures and sympathy for the conservation area. Is this not misleading and against the spirit of consultation? Does it not invalidate the consultation?

I am also concerned that there is little detail about phasing and how long businesses and residents will be interrupted.

I object to this scheme and think a rethink is needed. I am aware of the time pressures with local government reorganisation looming, but it is surely better to have a more well-thought through scheme.

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