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**From:** planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 23 July 2026 10:46  
**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: Rachael CookseyBuxton Civic Association  
From:

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-  
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Submission: Objection

Comments: Buxton Civic Association is a registered charity which seeks to conserve and enhance the unique heritage of Buxton and advocate its importance in making Buxton a special place to live or to visit. As part of our role in caring for Buxton and its surroundings, we vet and comment on all important planning applications and strategic plans in the town, seeking to improve development work wherever possible.

We have consulted our members on these proposals, at a meeting on 22 July 2026, and there was unanimous support for our objection to the applications. We have also written to MHCLG to request the Secretary of State uses the powers under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to call in the applications for his own determination.

We have reviewed the application, with a panel of local professionals advising the Board of Trustees. We consider that the application is of more than local importance, given the status of Buxton as an historic town with many listed buildings (including the historic grade 1 listed Buxton Crescent, the grade 2 \* listed Buxton Opera House and the grade 2 \* listed Devonshire Dome) and several conservation areas.

At this stage, given the imminent end of the consultation period, we are writing to express our objection to the applications, setting out our main concerns. However, we will be following this up with a more detailed objection which will set out our concerns in more detail.

At this stage our concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. the scale, height and design of the proposed development, including the proposed materials,
2. the large number of apartments that are proposed, none of which will be 'affordable',

3. and the loss of existing parking for the town centre whilst increasing the need for parking through a development of this scale.

In more detail, the proposal raises significant concerns relating to the scale, height and design of the proposed redevelopment scheme, with over 330 apartments being proposed in a range of buildings which are three, four and five storeys in height. This scale and form of development would have profound impact on the character of Buxton, which is defined by its Regency architecture and spaces. The scale, height, design and materials are more typical of a major urban redevelopment scheme, rather than an appropriate and sympathetic addition to an historic town centre. There is a preponderance of brick rather than local stone and the extensive use of other modern materials which would only be acceptable in a much more limited and discreet use.

We are particularly disappointed that the quality of the scheme has been considerably reduced since the public consultation in 2025. The quality of materials has been ‘cheapened’ by the omission or reduction of the high-quality materials which reflected the character and special history of Buxton, such as copper zinc and natural stone. There was a significant amount of support in principle for that scheme, but that has now been lost through the detrimental changes to the scheme. Moreover, the planning application now proposes a development that is predominantly residential rather than focussed on regeneration.

Regarding the proposed apartments, the pre-application version of the redevelopment scheme which formed the basis of initial public consultation had substantially lower numbers of residential units. The submitted scheme proposes 332 apartments, with over 300 of these being one- and two-bedroom units, a number which would substantially imbalance the housing market in Buxton.

Moreover, although there has been a reference in a press release which accompanied the submission of the application, to 5% of the units being made available at lower rents to local people, the application form and submitted Planning Statement state that none of the units would be affordable, contrary to adopted planning policy. Whilst the submitted Planning Statement says that a viability assessment has been carried out to justify the policy departure, this has not been submitted with the application. We request that this be made available or, at a minimum, a non-technical summary be provided.

The third major concern is the lack of parking for the development. The redevelopment of the existing town centre car park, which also serves The Springs, would result in the loss of many of the car parking spaces, which are conveniently located, whilst conversely resulting in a need for parking for over 330 apartments. There are currently approximately 460 parking spaces in the car parks within the site, and this would be reduced to 264. The result would be a very significant reduction in parking, whilst adding 332 residential units. There is a passing reference to additional parking that may be provided elsewhere, but for which there is no application. The substantial loss of on-site parking is likely to have a very significant and harmful impact on the vitality of Buxton town centre and its existing retail units.

We also have many concerns about specific details and how matters such as sustainable development, nutrient neutrality, ecology and biodiversity have been dealt with. The development is a significant missed opportunity regarding sustainable development, relying on heat pumps and making passing reference to solar panels being an option without including any in the design. Similarly, regarding nutrient neutrality in the River Wye SAS, ecology and

biodiversity, the development appears to do the minimum required rather than taking the this once in a generation opportunity to provide significant biodiversity and environmental enhancements.

Finally, our concern that this application should be called in, is further underlined by the fact that most of the application site is owned by High Peak Borough Council, which is also the Local Planning Authority. To avoid any perception that the Council is not free of any bias or predetermination, we believe it would be appropriate for the application to be called in for determination by the Secretary of State, rather than being dealt with by one of the Council's own committees.

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