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Application Reference No. : HPK/2026/0228 Site Address: Spring Shopping Centre & Land South of Station Road
Buxton Derbyshire Comments by: Robert Andrew Parker [REDACTED]

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Submission: Neither

Comments: I welcome the proposal to regenerate the proposed area of the town and through the increase in resident population, encourage the growth of the local economy, particularly that of the nighttime. The strategy of the Council in using the limited initial grant to purchase land and buildings to enable further private investment is to be applauded. The initial plans put forward during consultation were bold and ambitious and suggested an area that would be pleasant to live and spend time in. The buildings, though constrained by available land area and cost, showed imagination and some acknowledgement of leading British 21st century architecture which is world renowned.

I share concerns of many that the scheme represents a bold move towards a different style of living which, though popular in large cities and conurbations, has yet to be trialled in a market town. For this to be successful, the development must show that there will be a range of day and night time activities for the new residents as well as continuing to cater for the many visitors and existing residents to the town. Travel in this semi-rural area is another problem that will have to be addressed for this to be a thriving area.

The application does not provide any justification for the balance between the number of different types of apartments. Before passing the application, there should be more financial modelling made available to justify the total number of apartments as well as the balance between the types. Capital & Centric must obviously create a financially stable development for the town and within the constraints of commercial confidence, should demonstrate that to be the case before permission is granted.

As we move towards a carbon neutral economy, the proposal should clearly make sustainable choices easily available to residents. The apartments should all be heated and ventilated via air source heat pumps and arrangement of these should be clearly shown on the plans so that they do not impair the visual aesthetic of the development. It is important with clearly rising temperatures, even at this altitude, that there should be significant planting in the development to avoid heat traps and mitigate the effects of the large surface areas of the new buildings. The planting shown at the original consultation has been significantly reduced in these plans and they

should not be approved until this planting is reinstated or increased. The replacement of the of the roof and balcony planting with membrane roofs and bare balconies is not acceptable.

Transport to and around the town will be considerably impacted by this development. Assumptions have been made about car ownership of the new residents which will only be realised if other factors are put in place. There must be clear provision of space for bike storage and charging both for residents and visitors as well as encouraging Buxton residents to access the town centre by bike. Visitor bike storage/parking should be clearly indicated on the plans. Whilst limited dedicated parking bays for residents may be required, equal priority should be given to establishing dedicated parking bays for a bank of car club vehicles. I would suggest a minimum of 10 spaces initially, each with an EV charging point. Special rates for car club membership should be included with apartment rental agreements and the concept of a car club, which is not widely understood, should be actively promoted in sales literature and by the proposed Travel Plan Co-ordinator.

The High Peak has a higher age demographic than the national average and provision of car parking for the elderly and those with disabilities is already inadequate as can be easily observed by the queue for the existing provision at times. Although the additional parking area behind the station will be welcome, it will not provide for this section of the population. A second subterranean car park near the existing Waitrose store, possibly with a restriction for able-bodied drivers at certain times of the day, would be a welcome solution. Provision of some rapid charging points at the proposed car park behind the station might encourage a better occupancy rate.

Much has been said about the style of the architecture and its relationship to the existing buildings of Buxton. In my view, we should resist any attempt to recreate the style of two centuries ago. I consider the type of building created by McCarthy & Stone on Station Road to be nothing but a Hollywood pastiche which would no doubt be admired by Donald Trump. We already have amazing architecture from previous centuries we should use this opportunity to build buildings that represent the 21st century. Having said that, good architecture should not slavishly follow a dedicated style, but adapt to individual location. The suggestions during the consultation period of including reference to local materials and history seem to have largely disappeared from this application and it should be refused on this omission alone.

This planning application seems to have been optimised for financial return at the expense aspects of aesthetics and convenience. A better balance can be achieved and I look forward to a renewed application.

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