

Objection to HPK/2026/0228 - The Springs / Spring Gardens redevelopment, Buxton

Louise Potter Bishops Grange Bishops Lane Buxton Sk17 6Up	8 July 2026 Nature of submission: objection Application: HPK/2026/0228
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To: Planning Officer, High Peak Borough Council
Submitted via: High Peak Borough Council planning portal

Dear Planning Officer,

I object to application HPK/2026/0228.

I support the regeneration of Buxton town centre in principle. However, I do not believe the current application is acceptable in its submitted form. My objection is based on material planning considerations, including layout and density, parking, highway safety, traffic, local infrastructure, public amenity, affordable housing, design, heritage impact and the effect on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Scale, density and change from consultation

Residents understood from earlier public consultation that the scheme would provide a much smaller number of homes, understood locally to be around 120 homes. The submitted application is now for more than 300 homes. This appears to be a substantial change in scale, density and impact. I ask the council to require a clear comparison between the consultation material and the submitted application, including the number and tenure of homes, the level of parking, changes to public facilities, changes to commercial floorspace and impacts on heritage assets.

The proposed number of homes, together with commercial uses and public realm changes, would place a very substantial new residential population onto a constrained town-centre site. I ask the council to assess whether the proposed height, massing, layout and density are appropriate for Spring Gardens and whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the character of Buxton town centre and the conservation area.

Parking

Parking is one of my principal objections. Existing town-centre parking is already heavily used, particularly during the periods when local council taxpayers can park free of charge. A development of more than 300 homes, many of them understood to be two-bedroom flats, could create significant additional parking demand from residents, visitors, carers, staff, deliveries, taxis, tradespeople and servicing.

At the same time, the scheme appears to reduce or displace existing town-centre parking. I do not consider it safe to assume that public transport and cycle parking will remove the need for practical car parking in Buxton, especially given the town's geography, weather, existing traffic pressures and reliance on visitors from surrounding areas.

If the applicant or council relies on proposed parking near Buxton station as mitigation, that provision should not be treated as adequate unless it is approved, funded, legally secured, operational and available before any existing parking is lost or displaced. The council should also assess whether replacement parking is suitably located for elderly people, disabled users, families, local shoppers and visitors who need convenient access to Spring Gardens and existing businesses.

Traffic and highway safety

I am concerned about additional vehicle movements around Spring Gardens, Station Road and the nearby roundabout. This area is already busy and constrained. The council should require robust evidence on traffic generation, junction capacity, highway safety, pedestrian safety, deliveries, waste collection, servicing, emergency access and construction traffic. A large rental development may also generate frequent vehicle movements for removals, deliveries and short-term visitors.

Town-centre vitality and existing businesses

Convenient parking and access are vital to Spring Gardens. If local residents and visitors find it harder to park, existing shops and retail units may suffer. That could weaken footfall and create further vacancies. The council should assess the impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre, including the risk to existing anchor stores and everyday retail services. Regeneration should strengthen the town centre, not make it harder for people to use the shops and services that are already there.

Local infrastructure and cumulative impact

The application should be considered alongside other housing growth in Buxton, including Foxlow Fields, Burlow Road, Harpur Hill and other new development. The cumulative impact on GP surgeries, dentists, schools, public transport, local services, drainage, waste collection, public toilets and community facilities should be properly

assessed. Where mitigation is required, it should be secured through planning obligations before permission is granted.

Affordable housing

The application should be scrutinised carefully in relation to affordable housing. I ask the council to state clearly what proportion of the more than 300 homes will be genuinely affordable, what type of affordable housing is proposed, whether it will be provided on site, how long it will remain affordable, and how it will be secured through a section 106 agreement. If the applicant proposes a lower level than policy would normally expect, the viability case should be independently tested and clearly explained to residents and councillors.

Public facilities and public benefit

The proposal appears to be presented as bringing new public realm and civic benefits. Those benefits should be clear, deliverable and legally secured. I ask the council to explain how public facilities, including public toilets, accessible public space, disabled access and any civic or cultural uses, will be protected and funded over the long term. If public bodies such as the museum or council services are expected to occupy space in privately owned buildings, the council should explain how that arrangement is in the public interest and how it has been assessed against other options, including council-owned buildings.

Heritage and design

Buxton's historic character is central to its identity and economy. The scheme should preserve or enhance the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings, including Winster Place. I ask the council to assess the design, materials, rooflines, massing, scale and public realm against the town's historic character, not simply against the need to deliver a large number of rental homes.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I ask High Peak Borough Council to refuse the application in its current form, or defer determination and require the applicant to submit a revised scheme with reduced density, a robust parking and highways strategy, clearer affordable housing provision, stronger heritage protection, proper public amenity provision and further public consultation.

Yours faithfully,

Louise Potter