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Application Reference No. : HPK/2026/0229 Site Address: Spring Shopping Centre & Land South of Station Road Buxton Derbyshire Comments by: Jonathan Higginbottom
From:

7
Carlisle Road
Corbar Ward
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6XE
Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Submission: Objection
Comments: The proposed redevelopment risks failing to reverse Buxton's decline because it assumes the population loss is driven by a housing shortage, rather than underlying issues like affordability, employment, or service access. Adding an estimated 880 new residents through this development changes the input numbers but does not fix the actual cycle driving people away. Systems theory indicates that unless the root cause of the population decline is addressed, the underlying downward trend will simply reassert itself once the initial influx of residents is absorbed. Ultimately, judging the scheme's success merely by the completion of new buildings on the Springs site ignores whether the project actually strengthens the wider town's viability.

The scheme's housing model concentrates risk and transfers durable decision-making power away from the local community to a single external investor. By structuring the 332 new homes almost entirely as a build-to-rent product with only five percent set aside for reduced local rent, the project drastically limits the town's ability to adapt to diverse and changing housing needs. This single-landlord model shifts long-term control over rents, leases, and future uses out of the town. If the external landlord's financial priorities eventually diverge from Buxton's civic needs, the community is left without an alternative channel to influence the future of a massive town-centre asset.

Finally, the viability of Buxton as a whole depends on all its parts functioning together, yet the scheme lacks a published mechanism to bridge the gap between the town's strong visitor economy and its struggling resident commercial base. A revitalised centre that fails to measurably strengthen and connect with historically disadvantaged areas like Fairfield does not deliver genuine whole-system stability. Furthermore, Buxton¿s town centre has recently suffered pandemic disruption, inflation shocks, and retail decline. Subjecting the town to a multi-year construction disturbance without an explicit transition plan for current traders risks permanently destabilising local businesses before they have had time to fully recover from these recent crises.

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