

## **Planning Committee Report September 2018**

The planning report covers the following applications that have been commented on:

### **1. Station Road Site**

The site encompassed the following applications:

#### **HPK/2018/0125**

BCA is delighted to give this outline application its full support as the proposed development of a medical centre is important for Buxton. The site is a very appropriate one, located as it is close to good public transport provision.

#### **b) HPK/2018/0124**

We support the application for the new access road. Any rights for continued access can be accommodated via the proposed on-site roadway and adjacent car parks.

#### **c) HPK/2018/0120**

The provision of facilities for elderly residents in the centre of Buxton is very much welcomed by BCA given its location to the shops and transport facilities. BCA comments relate to the design and appearance of the building given it is a prominent site in Buxton.

Due to the location of the site in the town there is the potential that this development will stand out. To minimise the visual impact there is a need to ensure that the tree planting scheme as proposed is designed to help break up the frontage and visually shield parts of the new development. A green wall scheme could also be incorporated to help mitigate some of the visual impact. It is important to ensure that native plants and trees consistent with the Buxton environment are used.

The current proposal has a square block appearance and whilst the stone represents the materials of the area there is a need to blend the design with other buildings present in Buxton. The design could be improved to reflect more of the town's heritage and combine this with the new modern aspects.

The building should incorporate sustainable features such as solar panels and for the collection of grey water. Consideration could also be given to the inclusion of a green roof.

The building should also include environmental features for the provision of bird nesting and bat roosting locations incorporated into the building design (e.g. RSPB design features).

Any rights for continued access could be accommodated via the proposed new on-site roadway and adjacent car parks.

### **2. HPK/2018/0241 Buckingham Hotel**

BCA notes that the Planning Application for the Burlington Hotel has made considerable effort to make their desired project work by showing awareness of previous planning comments. BCA wants to see the town retain its tradition as a beautiful high quality spa town and so the planned design must blend in with its surroundings.

BCA notes the following:

1 - the current building is in need of substantial works to address structural issues related to the building and that the best option may be demolition,

2 – the proposed design appears to embody elements of the current building and reflect the sites history of the town in a modern style.

3 – the scale of the development is more in line with the current site and incorporates the sustainability protocol BREAM etc.,

Comments from BCA members who attended a recent meeting also include the following:

Car parking – it is recognised there is a shortage of space in the town and so the number of places required is understood. The access to and from the car park should remain on Burlington Rd and focus on safety,

Trees – BCA wish to see the preservation of the 4 lime trees. Any trees removed should be replaced with native trees suitable for the Buxton climate

### **3. HPK/2018/0315 University of Derby Site Harpur Hill**

Our response covers matters relating to protecting our improving opportunities for nature conservation and biodiversity, minimising impact on climate change through energy conservation, sustainable transport and provision of housing for single people as well as affordable housing.

#### **Nature Conservation, Biodiversity and Provision for Wildlife**

A review of the plans shows that there are a considerable number of non-native tree and shrub species being proposed. Given the Buxton climate it is important that as far as possible locally native species to Buxton and the Peak District are utilised that are wildlife friendly. For example the tree planting should include mountain ash – (bird food) and other wildlife supporting trees. BCA consider that it should be a condition of the planning approval that wildlife friendly species are utilized, such species should include those listed by the Peak District National Park Authority for the White Peak/Dark Peak. Two trees must replace any listed trees that are approved for felling by HPBC arboriculture officer and this should form part of any planning consent.

For the open green spaces/amenity areas it is important that these include wildflower planting for the benefit of wildlife and in particular insects. The planting of typical grass species found on housing developments does not benefit our insects and in particular pollinators and we need to move away from this approach as it is more like green concrete. It is important to understand how the amenity areas will be managed and who will be responsible for this management to enhance the benefits to wildlife and in particular insects such as bees and butterflies.

The application makes reference to the importance of nesting boxes on houses and in the general area. It is important that the developers are actually required to include these in the development. BCA would like there to be a specific requirement to provide these in any planning approval.

#### **Affordable Housing**

BCA note that HPBC policy is 30% affordability housing of which 80% should be rental. It is noted that it is proposed to restrict this to 15% with no rental – BCA consider this should be at least 20% with at least 50% of those rental - much closer to HPBC policy.

#### **Housing Units**

It is noted in the application that there are no single bedroom units. These should be included in the development as is typical in continental housing developments. These types of units offer single people and couples an opportunity to rent or afford to buy small houses/flats.

#### **Transport**

Although the application refers to sustainable transport there is nothing included in this application. For example there is no provision within the development or local roadways for cycling routes. The developer should be required to invest in these.

### **4. HPK/2017/0110 Planning Appeal Leek Rd**

The BCA response to the appeal covers matters relating to those covered in the High Peak Local Plan especially relating to the protection of the Peak District area. BCA has already objected to the original planning application and understands that these objections have been included in the information forwarded to the Planning Inspector handling the appeal.

The reasons we are objecting to the planning application are covered below:

#### **High Peak Local Plan - Policy S2**

Under Policy S2 of the local plan it states that any development should be within the defined areas of the existing settlement or specified sites identified in the plan. The planning application covers

an area outside the defined built up area of Buxton and is not within a specified site identified in the plan and does not meet the exceptional circumstances criteria.

### **High Peak Local Plan - Policy EQ2**

High Peak BC Policy EQ2 of the Local Plan seeks to protect, enhance and restore the landscape character of the area covered by the Local Plan. The Persimmon's planned development will have a significant adverse visual impact on the landscape. The previous development has never blended into the landscape and is highly visible on entering Buxton from the West. The Persimmon development will add to the visual impact given the design of the housing and geography of the site. It should be noted that the proposed site comprises steep sloping sides. The adjacent development has issues with water flow and the residents have had to create barriers to reduce flow and prevent gardens being flooded. In addition with the steep roadway there are serious issues in winter with access and egress from the area due to snow. The main road into Buxton becomes heavily congested as residents have to park their cars on the roadside.

High Peak BC landscape consultant notes that the development is likely to have a significant and permanent adverse visual impact. It is noted that the Impact Assessment undertaken on behalf of Persimmon notes that the development would have a major impact. It can be concluded that the proposed development will not be in conformity with the High Peak Local Plan – Policy EQ2 and Policy EQ6.

### **High Peak Local Plan - Policy H1**

Under Policy H1 of the Local Plan HPBC will give consideration to approving suitable sites outside the designated area where a development will not lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside or have an adverse impact on the countryside. It should be noted that the adjoining landscape is part of the Peak District National Park. The planning application BCA consider the proposed development an intrusion into the countryside, in particular the adjoining Peak District National Park, and so does not meet the requirements of the Local Plan.

### **Conclusion**

Buxton Civic Association do not support this planning application as it does not comply with the requirements specified in the High Peak Local Plan that has been adopted. Specifically the application does not meet the following requirements S1, S2, H1, EQ2, EQ3.