

The Barnet Society

Campaigning for a better Barnet



***Barnet Society 20 criteria for development at High Barnet Station, 14 September 2019**

The Society has been fighting for years to regenerate Barnet town centre, and to improve access to and from High Barnet Station. Any development must begin by addressing community priorities, not profit.

We propose the following criteria for any development of the site. They have received overwhelming support from our membership.

The first five criteria are particularly important. Unless these are met, the project will not be supported by the Barnet Society.

1. We object to **high rise** development, but don't object to **high density** development. It must intrude as little as possible on views from nearby open spaces and the Green Belt, or on views of the historic town and its listed buildings.
2. The trees around High Barnet Station form, with Lee's Trees on Barnet Hill and Meadway Open Space, one of the '**green gateways**' that give Barnet town centre its special identity. The trees and greenery should be extended to the foot of the Hill. We do not want big 'landmark' buildings at the A1000/Meadway junction, nor should any overlook Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School.
3. Development must be conditional on **enhanced interchange between station, buses and taxis**. TfL claim to provide this, but its initial scheme showed no evidence of it. Provision should be made for onward public transport connections to Cockfosters, St Albans, Edgware and other points east, north and west, now or in the future.
4. We object to removal of 75% of the existing **car park**, which would displace cars onto local streets and discourage car-sharing and other integrated transport solutions. We wish to see an independent survey of where users come from. We don't understand how removing car parking places from the last tube station on the line will encourage people to use public transport, a stated aim of TfL. Furthermore, the London Mayor has no say about car usage from nearby Hertsmere residential developments. We would not necessarily object to a multi-storey or deck solution.
5. **Pedestrian access** to and from the station must be significantly improved. Better connection with New Barnet is essential, and a new pedestrian bridge over the tracks to Potters Lane would be highly desirable. Crossing of Barnet Hill must also be made easier, especially for the hundreds of Ark Pioneer Academy students. A footbridge across the A1000 should be considered, possibly attached to the side of the existing railway bridge.
6. The **technical challenges** of this site are probably greater than any of the others being studied by TfL. We question the viability of any buildings on the northern or western embankments since the below-ground structural engineering costs would be considerable. In addition, the need to retain the existing transformer building would seriously compromise the upgrading of the existing access road junction at the lower end of the A1000, which would be essential to relieve traffic congestion at the station access road higher up. The transformer building would also require shielding visually and against health risks.
7. We cherish the original parts of the **existing station**, a part of Barnet's history.

8. Rationalisation of the **station entrances and platform access** would be beneficial. Nothing is to be built that would impede future station improvements.
9. Improved **access, drop-off and pick-up**, particularly for the disabled and semi-ambulant, are essential.
10. We accept the need for new **housing**, especially affordable, but question the quantity proposed. We wish to see a variety of unit type, size and tenure e.g. shared ownership, key worker and first-time buyer, and management arrangements that discourage transient dwellers.
11. Any new development must follow **best practice in urban planning**, enhancing security and connectivity to neighbouring areas, and avoiding hostile boundaries to rail and road. Without this, there is a real risk of creating an urban ghetto. Retaining the transformer building exacerbates this risk by splitting the southern half of the site into two almost self-contained developments.
12. We welcome appropriate types of new **workspace**, e.g. start-ups, creative studios, flexible offices, traditional offices and/or shared workspace – but not at the expense of trees.
13. Local traffic on and off the A1000 is already very congested – even before the opening of Ark Pioneer Academy. **Road improvements** must be made, allowing for drainage and utilities upgrades, as well as possible deep sewerage problems (such as those recently occurring around Hadley Green).
14. The impact on **local services** including schools, GP and dental surgeries, which are already over-subscribed, must be quantified and properly planned for in advance of any development..
15. The development must be an **exemplar of environmental and ecological sustainability and diversity**, retaining and nurturing existing natural habitat and wildlife (including e.g. thrushes and deer). There should be more trees on the site after the development than before it.
16. **Air pollution and noise** from vehicles and trains must be mitigated properly by good landscaping and well-designed acoustic control mechanisms.
17. If built on, the **container and scaffolding depots** must be reprovided on suitable alternative sites.
18. The **TfL staff building** should be replaced, re-faced or at least screened.
19. The whole development must be of **high design quality**. We don't want a wall of unremarkable flats like other recent buildings along the A1000 and elsewhere.
20. Improvements must also be made to the **public realm up Barnet Hill and the lower High Street** from the station to St John the Baptist's church.