

Planning & Environment – Robin’s update for Committee, 11 November 2021

PLANNING ISSUES

Government

1. **COP26** – At the suggestion of our Vice President David Lee, on the eve of the international conference I wrote to our MP, Theresa Villiers, on behalf of the Society to ask her to encourage her Government colleagues to do all they can to facilitate a successful COP26 to save our planet.

I also listed 5 ways in which BSoc can do more (previously circulated). Simon W has given me some comments. *Does anyone else wish to comment?*

2. **Planning reforms** – Paused while the new Secretary of State, Michael Gove, focuses on ‘levelling-up’. Let’s hope that when his attention turns to planning, the government will abandon its more radical ideas & base its housing needs forecast on accurate data from the latest census.

Metropolitan Green Belt

3. **London Green Belt Council** – LGBC is turning itself into a Community Interest Charity (CIC). I’ll step down from the Executive when that happens. *Any volunteers to replace me?*
4. **Hertsmere draft Local Plan** (Regulation 18 version) – The Council proposes to build on over 10% of its Green Belt including parts of the routes in our *Rambles Round Barnet*. My web post about it <https://www.barnetsociety.org.uk/goodbye-to-our-green-belt> has attracted favourable responses from the Elstree & Borehamwood GB Society, the Radlett Society & CPRE Herts.

BSoc needs to comment on the Plan by 6 December. I’ve received detailed and helpful comments from BSoc member Bill Foster, a sound engineer, on flaws in the massive Media Quarter proposal. *Is anyone else able to help me?*



Proposed Media Quarter

Mayor of London

5. **Sustainable transport** – The Mayor is formulating London Plan Guidance (LPG) on sustainable transport, cycling & walking. Frances & I will attend a webinar on 17 Nov.
6. **Urban greening factor (UGF)** – He's also formulating an LPG on UGFs (which evaluate the quantity & quality of urban greening). I'm attending a webinar on the subject on 16 Nov. *Anyone else interested?*

Council

7. **Capita contract** – The Council is taking back regeneration, highways, regulatory services & procurement under its direct control – but oddly, not planning. According to Barnet Labour Party, the Capita contract has cost £217m (65%) more than originally agreed (£333m).
8. **Barnet Local Plan** – We await a date for the Examination in Public of the latest version. I've asked to speak on topics that particularly affect us (e.g. the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy & High Barnet Station, Whalebones & Barnet Playing Fields developments).
9. **Chipping Barnet Community Plan** – The Society was represented at recent introductory workshops for feasibility studies by Architecture 00 for:
 - (1) shared workspace (attended by Gail)
 - (2) a play masterplan (attended by Simon W)
 - (3) public realm & wayfinding improvements in & around the town centre (attended by Gail & me).Further workshops are being arranged.



10. **High Streets for All Challenge** – Gail & the Town Team are bidding for further funding from the Mayor of London.

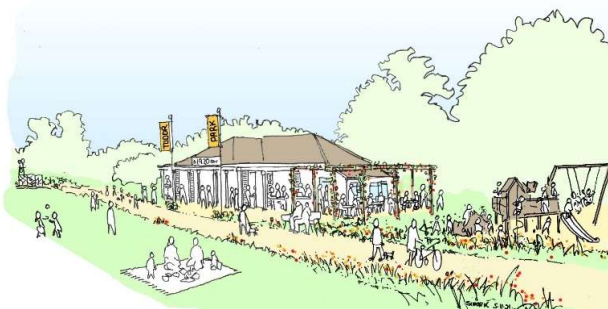
Planning appeals

11. **Hat-trick of planning appeal wins!**
 - (1) **70 High Street** – The owner has been ordered to reinstate *After Office Hours* within 12 months.
 - (2) **Whalebones estate** – Our 6-year persistence has been vindicated. But the developers may yet appeal to the Secretary of State or (preferably) submit a much more modest scheme to preserve the character of Whalebones & enable its management for the long term.
 - (3) **Telecom hubs, High Street (outside Victoria Bakery & The Spires)** – The two zombies have finally been killed off – or have they? (see next episode...)

12. **Whalebones Estate** – We've been congratulated by the Finchley Society (who recently won the Finchley Homebase appeal) & the Welwyn Garden City Society (who are awaiting a similar appeal & want to know how we won without legal aid).
13. **1 Sunset View** – Inspector's decision on unapproved alterations to Locally Listed house in Monken Hadley Conservation Area still awaited (after nearly a year).
14. **Arkley Riding School, Hedgerow Lane** – We had objected to four new houses in the Green Belt & on a site of Red & Amber-Listed wildlife species. I attended a public hearing in October; the Inspector's decision is awaited.
15. **33 Lyonsdown Road (LL)** – The owners have appealed to demolish this Locally Listed Victorian villa – one of the last surviving in New Barnet – & replace it with 20 flats. Guy Braithwaite & I worked with local residents on a representation supporting the Council's refusal. Guy & Susan bolstered it with 5 appendices of research (totalling 33 pages!).
16. **Land to rear of 14 Hadley Highstone** – The Council is trying to enforce an appeal ruling to remove derelict artefacts on a Green Belt site.

Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings

17. **54A High Street (GII)** – Application to convert this early C14 (& second-oldest London timber-framed) building has been approved at last.
18. **189 High Street** – A proposal for an attic flat with dormers has been refused.
19. **2 Clyde Villas, Hadley Green Road (LL)** – This proposal for 16 flats for people with special needs would cram too many into the building & garden. We objected. At the owner's invitation I visited to discuss a more acceptable proposal, but have heard nothing since.
20. **81 advertising banners on lamp-posts, High Street/Barnet Hill** – We objected.
21. **63A Union Street** – House & workspace replacing former, long-empty shop. We were neutral, but it's been withdrawn.
22. **39 Wood Street** – Proposed garden studio. We objected & it's been withdrawn
23. **Holmside, 145 Barnet Road (LL)** – Replacement of Arts & Crafts house (nominated for the Local List) by larger & inappropriate modernist one has been approved.
24. **Tudor Park pavilion (LL)**



Simon C has drafted a vision document & mission statement, Simon K has looked at design options, & John is advising on a business plan. Council architects are expected to complete their survey of the building in the New Year. **Volunteers are urgently needed from the community around Tudor Park to join a working party**

Threats/opportunities

25. **The Spires** – No further news.
26. **Former Barnet Market, Chipping Close** – The site has been sold, most likely for housing.
27. **High Barnet Station** – Taylor Wimpey (TfL's development partner) has withdrawn from this & the Finchley Central Station projects, but that's unlikely to be the end of the story.
28. **49 Moxon Street** – Large housing development at the bottom of the street. The developer contacted me for advice & suggested a meeting. I've heard nothing since.
29. **50 Moxon Street** – A special school for ASD in a converted office block. Designs exhibited last month were underwhelming, traffic could be a problem & we have severe concern about inadequate outdoor playspace, which is almost entirely on the roof.

RECENT CASEWORK (SELECTION)

Planning application approved

30. **83 High Street (former Victoria Bakery) & 8 Union Street.**
31. **Brake Shear House, 164 High Street** – We objected to gates to this housing.
32. **Telecom hub, High Street (outside the Police Station)** – We objected.

Planning decisions awaited

33. **Former Quinta Club, Mays Lane** – We support conversion of this derelict building into a facility for the storage, archiving & dispatching of library books.



Quinta Club: (L) existing, (R) proposed

34. **Victoria Quarter** – Although the number of homes has been reduced by 15% to 554, & the height of some blocks lowered, the type of housing & its monolithic design are still worse than the plans approved four years ago, so we've objected.
35. **Western half of Meadow Works site, Pricklers Hill (8 3-storey houses)** – We supported these new family homes & gardens.

36. **Gaelic football pavilion, King George's playing field** (GB) – A replacement [above R] for a previous building on the south side of Dollis Brook (not to be confused with the sports/leisure hub proposed for Barnet Playing Fields on the north side of the Brook).
37. **Barnet House, 1255 High Street** – The latest application is for 260 homes in, on top of & behind this prominent slab in Whetstone. We've objected.
38. **Electricity battery, Partingdale Lane** (GB) – We objected to this abuse of Green Belt.
39. **Cockfosters Station** – We've strongly objected to Enfield about the adverse impact of its four towers up to 13 storeys high.

Planning application withdrawn

40. **The Totteridge Academy city farm** (GB) – We supported a classroom & WCs on this former meadow because they would assist revival of agricultural use.

Further afield

41. **Hendon Hub** (CA) – Susan & I had submitted a detailed critique of plans for expansion of Middlesex University & relocation of the Central Library. The Council has decided to proceed regardless.



The Burroughs – proposed views: (L) to N-W, Town Hall on L & new library on R, (R) to S-E