

## **Planning & Environment – Robin’s update for Committee, 11 November 2022**

### PLANNING ISSUES

#### Government

**Michael Gove** is back as Secretary of State (SoS) for Levelling-Up etc (LUH&C), so the Levelling-Up & Regeneration Bill may soon be back, plus a new Planning Bill. The content of the latter is as yet unknown. Theresa Villiers MP is leading a large group of MPs concerned about planning (and no doubt their Parliamentary seats) who are watching both bills closely.

#### London Green Belt Council

**LGBC website** – Derek Epstein & Simon Watson have kindly donated their time and expertise to updating and adding to this brilliant site: <https://londongreenbeltcouncil.org.uk/>

#### London Forum

This influential network (of which BSoc is a member) is holding an open meeting – free plus nibbles and drinks – on ***The Future for Our High Streets*** at 6:30pm on Monday 21 November at The Gallery, 75 Cowcross Street EC1M 8EL.

- *Anyone interested? If so, please contact me.*

#### Barnet Council

**Examination in Public** of Barnet’s draft Local Plan (LP) is nearly over. I’ve spent several days at the Town Hall over the last seven weeks. Proceedings have been bottom-achingly thorough, though the two Planning Inspectors have been scrupulously fair and considerate to the (few) local resident reps who have participated.

Changes will be made (some due our lobbying), but they won’t be published until the end of this month. A draft final version will emerge early next year for further consultation. If all goes well, it will be adopted next summer or autumn.

One of our main concerns has been addressed: the Council has scrapped all reference to the flawed ‘value’ and ‘quality’ assessments in Barnet’s Parks & Open Spaces Strategy.

I presented forceful BSoc representations against the LP’s housing allocations for High Barnet Station (292 homes) and Whalebones (152) homes – my thanks to Guy Braithwaite, Simon Kaufman & Nick Saul for their help. They seemed to have some impact; after my Whalebones statement one of the Inspectors said they had ‘a lot to reflect on’, but what difference they will make I can’t say. Here’s an update on each project:

**High Barnet Station** – TfL is looking for a new development partner and aims to start on site within 2-5 years. Their man at the hearing, Mr Hodges, thought their 2019 plans are fine, but I made it clear that we think 292 is too many and not appropriate for the location.

**Whalebones** – Hill are in discussion with Barnet about 100-120 homes. They hope to consult BSoc early next year and submit an application next summer. I said we could only support a single-digit total unless they can come up with a scheme with more powerful community and environmental benefits.

## RECENT CASEWORK (SELECTION)

### Green Belt cases

**49 Moxon Street** – We objected strongly to this attempt to squeeze 92 flats and several businesses into a 7-storey building next to King George's Fields (which is in the Green Belt). Decision awaited.

**Land off Mays Lane, Greengate Stables** – We supported applications by Strength & Learning Through Horses Another for the first stages of their project, subject to conditions to protect habitat and wildlife. The new manège has been approved; a decision is awaited on further development.

**Gaelic football pavilion, King George's playing field** – Decision still awaited on this replacement for a previous pavilion. We were neutral.

**Electricity battery, Partingdale Lane** – The Society was one of 912 objectors to the original application to build on the GB. It was refused but has gone to appeal.

**Cockfosters Station** – The Minister for Transport over-ruled Enfield's approval (by one vote) of four towers on the car park overlooking the Green Belt. Cockfosters Local Area Residents Associations (CLARA) has requested that the application be called in for determination by the SoS for LUH&C.



*Cockfosters Station: visualisation of the development*

**Sky Studios North, Rowley Lane** – Application for ten more sound stages on the Green Belt. A decision is awaited.

### Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings

**Crown & Anchor, 47 High Street** – The owner's appeal against refusal of permission to alter ground floor openings has been dismissed. We had objected to lack of detail in the application. We've also objected to an application for a pergola beside, and a new building behind, the pub, which is Locally Listed and in the Wood Street CA, but is now a restaurant.

**The Mitre, 58 High Street** – We welcome the desire to restore this historic – and possibly very ancient – pub, but are disappointed by the proposal's lack of historical awareness, dendrochronological analysis and detailed design. We've objected.

**70 High Street** – We strongly objected to the latest (3<sup>rd</sup>) façade redesign. Decision awaited.

**98-100 High Street (fka Foxtons)** – Proposed enlargement of building into ground-floor co-working employment space with flats above. We were neutral. The plans have been slightly amended and one flat omitted (now 11 in total). Decision awaited.

**118 High Street (fka TSB Bank & Barnet Press)** – An application for a 'bingo' gaming licence has been approved. We and 771 others strongly objected to the change of use, and

a decision is awaited. The proposed signage for this Grade II-listed building has been refused because 'no public benefit has been identified that would outweigh the harm to the heritage asset'. That should trump the licence, but look out for an appeal...



*BSoc makes a difference! (1)... 118 High Street: L – initial design; R – revised design*

**161 High Street** – Rear and roof extensions. We had no comment. It's been refused.

**202 High Street (fka Bentleys)** – The developer is back again with a reduced scheme (commercial + 4 flats and 1 mews house). We've objected again.

**2 Clyde Villas, Hadley Green Road (LL)** – A new application is in, this time for adults recovering from mental illness and involving less damage to house and garden. We'll give it the same detailed scrutiny as for previous plans.

**81 advertising banners on lamp-posts, High Street/Barnet Hill** – Still no decision.

**1 Raydean Road** – One of an interwar row of houses in the International Style, rare in Barnet and Locally Listed. We've supported an extension and minor alterations in keeping.

**33 Lyonsdown Road** – Martyn Gerrard, the owners, have not responded to our offer to discuss Simon Kaufman's alternative scheme converting and extending this Victorian villa. It was scheduled for demolition on 1 October but still stands as I write, though internal panelling has been gutted. Theresa Villiers MP received a letter from the Under Secretary of State at the Department of LUH&C encouraging us to continue discussion with the Council about an Article 4 Direction for assets on the Local List, but that will be too late to save it.

#### **Tudor Park pavilion**

- *Simon Cohen/Kaufman to report*

**Tudor Park playground** – The outcome of the consultation on new equipment is awaited.

Planning decisions awaited



*BSoc makes a difference! (2)....150 High Street: L – initial design; R – revised design*

**150 High Street** – We objected to the garish initial proposals. A more restrained design has now been submitted.

**152 High Street** – Extension up to the roofline of neighbouring buildings. We objected.

**Land behind 36 Park Road** – 6 new houses on vacant backland. We supported them.

**63A Union Street** – Another application for this site by Coe's Alley. We were neutral again.

**Former public WCs, Great North & Station Roads** – We're neutral about this internet café.

**Western half of Meadow Works site, Pricklers Hill** (8 x 3-storey houses) – We supported these new family homes and gardens.

**1 Albert Road, New Barnet** – We objected to the overdevelopment and poor environment of this 5-storey block of flats by the railway line and next to the Victoria Quarter.

Planning appeal decision ignored

**1 Sunset View** – The owner was given 6 months to make good unapproved alterations to this Locally Listed house in the Monken Hadley CA. Nothing appears to have been done.

Planning appeal decisions awaited

**159 High Street** – We objected to a flat in the roofspace, which would alter its roof in the Monken Hadley CA.

**1-9 & 10-15 Richard Court, Alston Road** – We've objected to extra storeys on both these blocks of flats.

Judicial review sought

**Victoria Quarter** – The developer has appealed for a judicial review of the Planning Inspector's recent dismissal of their appeal.

## Further afield

**Hendon Central Library, The Burroughs** – Following objections from BSoc and many other residents, the Council has abandoned its proposal to sell this Grade II-listed building to Middlesex University and replace it with a new one.



*Hendon Central Library*

**Grange Estate open space, East Finchley** – The value of urban green spaces seems to be gaining traction. Earlier this year plans by Barnet Homes to build 43 homes on this existing green space near High Road and the North Circular were bitterly opposed by residents. A revised plan has now been approved for 16 homes, none of them on the green space.

# Fight to save green space

Residents say the land is vital for community events, sports and children's play

Simon Allen, Local Democracy Reporter

NEIGHBOURS in East Finchley are battling to save a green space that has been placed under threat from development plans. Residents warn the plans by council housing arm Barnet Homes, to build on the land in Brownswell Road, would remove one of the only suitable play spaces in an area already lacking in parks and open space.

Proposals outlined in February at the council's housing and growth committee would see 42 affordable homes built on council-owned sites at The Grange Estate, including 26 at the site in Brownswell Road. Three existing homes are set to be demolished.

Resident Yvonne Beattie said building on the green space would have a "massive impact", particularly on her daughter and her friends who use it to play. She said: "We don't have the luxury of gardens, and this is the next best thing."

The campaigners say the space is used by a football club and for community gatherings, as well as being used regu-



Campaigners are battling to save the green space from development

lar. She added: "They said we could have a new build [...] but I would have to move out for three years and move back again."

Ms Weston said Barnet Homes had initially not offered to rehouse children over 18 but agreed to do so in her case on medical grounds. However, she added that she was being asked for documents such as bank statements for her children that she did not want to hand over.

Another resident, who did not want to be named, also said Barnet Homes had told him it would use a CPO if he did not negotiate. Ms Stuchers said residents had suggested Barnet Homes could use a nearby site that would be more suitable for development – part of a car park that had been occupied by shipping containers for 15 years.

The campaigners are now hoping to have the green space listed as an asset of community value, which would make it easier for residents to bid for it if it comes up for sale. A spokesperson for The Barnet Group, the council-owned company that runs Barnet Homes, said the company is building homes on 40

*Grange Estate open space*

