

The revised design for the hotel, in which the entrance is moved to Bruce Road



Premier Inn refuses to throw in the towel

The developers behind a proposed Premier Inn in Barnet Market are pushing ahead with a revised application despite having the first one rejected, writes Nick Jones

However, the new proposals seem to have done little to allay the concerns of residents living closest to the planned hotel.

The council turned down the initial plan in July, saying that the plans were detrimental to local residents, but now the backers, Locate Developments, have come back to the table with new proposals that they hope will pass muster.

Simon Shaw, development director, said the company hoped that the changes would reassure residents in the surrounding area that they were doing all they could to meet local concerns.

But Richard Gardham of Chipping Close said a 100-bed hotel was far too big for such a small site.

The increase in traffic in their road would be horrendous.

“The developers are just trying to soft-soap everyone into thinking a hotel will benefit Barnet, but there is no evidence it will bring business to the town or attract new retailers to the Spires.”

**- Richard Gardham,
Chipping Close**

“The developers are just trying to soft-soap everyone into thinking a hotel will benefit Barnet, but there is no evidence it will bring business to the town or attract new retailers to the Spires.”

However, Mr Shaw insisted that Locate had taken on board earlier criticisms expressed by residents and changes recommended by

Barnet’s planning committee:

- The hotel entrance would now be in Bruce Road. There would be no pedestrian or vehicular access to the hotel from Chipping Close. All hotel deliveries would be via the Spires’ service yard, avoiding Bruce Road and Chipping Close.
- Opaque glazing would be fitted to all windows on the ground, first and second floors facing Chipping Close to address residents’ fears their homes would be overlooked.
- The pavement alongside the hotel’s frontage in Chipping Close would be re-surfaced with an acoustic-friendly material to reduce noise generated by wheelie suitcases.
- A contribution to be made to a review of the local controlled parking zone to address concerns about on-street parking. Hotel guests would be encouraged to pay £3 a day to use the Spires’ car park which would be open to guests on a 24-hour basis.

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Page 11: Classic cars brightened up the army barracks with their classy display

Mr Shaw said Locate aimed to resubmit its planning application by the end of September and if approval was obtained, work would start early in 2019 and the hotel would be for business by early 2020.

“Our plan is for a town centre hotel, that fits in with the character of High Barnet. It is not going to be the kind of Premier Inn situated alongside motorways.

“The guests we would expect to attract are people doing business in the locality or those visiting families and friends.

“Other possible sites have been mentioned, such as the former High Barnet police station, the former Brake Shear house workshops, or the former Barnet College building at the junction of the High Street and Fitzjohn Avenue, but they are not available, nor do they have secure car parking space nearby.”

Among those supporting Mr Shaw’s argument that High Barnet would gain from a Premier Inn was Ave Vinick of Sebright Road. “A new hotel is just what High Barnet needs. Our High Street shops are teetering on the edge and this would be a big boost.

“I think we all understand the concern of the Chipping Close residents, but the alternative to a sympathetically-designed Premier Inn is probably going to be a block of flats and that will be far less appealing.”

The hotel would be three storeys high facing Chipping Close and this is still far too high in the view of Alan Howard who has lived in the Close since he was a child.

“The hotel is going to be four storeys high facing the Spires and it will block out the sun in our garden.”

His wife Mary Howard also remained unconvinced. She doubted whether hotel guests would spend money in nearby shops and restaurants.

Steven Strudders, another Chipping Close resident, argued that the changes didn’t address their concerns. “We will still get loads of cars doing U-turns in Chipping Close. We just don’t like the scale and proximity of the new hotel – it might have been different with a development that was more respectful to the neighbourhood.”

Anthony Collett, another critic of the plan, said a new hotel on the market place would clog up the area. “If you want to build a new hotel there is plenty of space around Borehamwood.”

Chris Nightingale of Friends of Barnet Market expressed support for the hotel but that was on condition there was evidence of real guarantees that a secure new site would be found for the market.

Robin Bishop, chair of the Barnet Society, said he was concerned about the likely traffic snarl-up around the St Albans Road and High Street junction if Bruce Road was used as the entrance. The revised plans will now be considered by the society’s committee and planning advisers and every effort would be made to consult the society’s membership, and especially those living in nearby roads.

“Once we have looked at these proposals and consulted widely, the society will respond to any fresh planning application made by Locate,” said Mr Bishop.

Locate has organised a couple of ‘open’ forums to run the revised plan across local residents. Opinions varied but the general mood was still one of opposition to the proposed development. It is still unclear what the outcome would be for the exiting Barnet Market, though various scenarios have been mooted.

Why the Barnet Society backed first application



The original proposal for the hotel was turned down by Barnet Council’s planning committee even though planning officials recommended that it be accepted

Some members were disappointed that the Society did not object to Premier’s application. I’d like to respond by making a couple of points, writes Robin Bishop.

First, our decision to support it – subject to stringent conditions – was made after consulting the whole Committee plus two Vice-Presidents and several members with planning, architectural and transport expertise. Only one of them opposed the application.

Secondly, the Committee now recognises that we didn’t fully reflect the strength of local feeling on this issue. We’ve since reviewed how we deal with large and sensitive proposals like Premier Inn, and agreed that we could do more to consult members.

We’ve recently upgraded our membership database and in future, when time permits, we’ll do what we can to consult members directly if they would be particularly affected by major developments.

There’s an alternative, more positive, view about a new hotel that’s taken by people who’ve been striving for years to revive our failing local economy – including long-standing Barnet Society members – and is attracting widespread public support. It’s that a hotel would help to generate new business and employment within our town centre, and a buzz that would extend way beyond Chipping Barnet. If public interest in the Battle of Barnet continues to grow – as the recent highly successful Medieval Festival indicated – a hotel sympathetically designed for the Monken Hadley conservation area would be an additional attraction.

Apparently £3.5M from The Spires’ sale of the present market site will largely be spent investing in further shopping centre improvements. Several major retailers are considering opening – but will only do so if a planning application for the hotel is successful, and soon.

Council seek path to redemption



Another go: Planners have gone back to the drawing board after widespread criticism of the last build-out plans

In June the Council consulted the public about a revised scheme of improvements to the High Street. Local residents were sent a letter and plans were displayed in Chipping Barnet Library. The Society believed this was insufficient publicity or explanation for a project of such importance, **writes Robin Bishop.**

We therefore displayed the drawings at the Medieval Festival, and helped to staff a vacant shop in The Spires. These attracted considerable interest and generated animated debate – on balance positive. Partly as a result of our efforts, some 200 comments were submitted – a considerable increase over last year's consultation on the previous scheme. As I write, however, the outcome still hasn't been officially announced.

Notwithstanding, the Council has been progressing survey and design work. Trial holes have been dug to check the feasibility of planting trees along the High Street, apparently with favourable results.

If the project does proceed, it's unlikely to be before 2019. Since Affinity Water and Virgin Media works are planned in the autumn and the Christmas Fayre takes place in December, that makes sense. But if delayed beyond March, it will be too late to plant the trees until next autumn.

Although generally supportive, we remain frustrated about a number of crucial details. We've been pestering Highways about these for the last year, but getting answers has been like getting blood out of stones (or paving slabs).

Will the species and size of trees be appropriate? Will they be co-located with the new seating, bins and other street furniture to create landmarks and meeting points, and minimise obstacles to pedestrians and wheelchair users?

Will the existing street lamps and their banner brackets be retained and repainted? We've already been told that there's no money for new signs, but the existing ones should at least be cleaned and point in the right direction!

And regardless of the consultation result, could the Council please make good the soft and hard landscaping of St John's Churchyard? It's messy, the loose planter blocks are hazardous and, as I write, smashed telecoms boxes adorn the pavement.

Views on the new-look scheme

General

- Over 80% were in favour or certainly had no objection.
- A number were neutral with less than 10% against.
- Few people approached the display with a completely open mind and those against tended to be vociferous.
- When confronted with the case for, especially when facts were offered to challenge incorrect perceptions and they had no answers, they tended to become angry.

Parking

- Main objection was loss of parking. But when questioned they had never parked on the high street or didn't own a car. It was a perception!
- Some people wanted half hour free parking in High Street. They go to Borehamwood or Potters Bar or Whetstone because parking is free.
- Only 7 spaces are lost out of circa 800, so really not many.
- Loss of parking spaces is an issue. Which then led on to bad parking in High Barnet generally.
- Many unaware of free parking in Moxon St and Hadley Green.

Seating

- Lack of seats especially in The Spires
- Concern about homeless using new seats.

Enforcement

- High Street is a Conservation Area but the rules are flouted and no action is taken
- In other Conservation Areas the Council dictates the shop signs so they are all in a prescribed format. Marlborough & Cambridge.

Traffic Management

- There are 10 sets of traffic lights between Everyman and St Albans Rd so of course the traffic stop starts all the way up A1000.
- The junction between High St and Wood Street is not clear to traffic travelling South who want to turn right.

Width of the High Street

- The graphics led many people to believe the carriageway was going to be narrower so traffic would be impeded.

Disability

- Someone suggested raise height of pavements so no thresholds to shops.

Planning & Environment Report

Robin Bishop

The most controversial case this summer has been the Premier Inn, which we have covered in detail on Page 1 and 2

Other major developments to watch

In June the Whalebones estate design team publicly presented their first ideas (See plan below)

- replacement accommodation for the artists and bee-keepers;
- publicly-accessible woodland along Wood Street; and
- 100-180 new homes on the field adjoining the Elmbank development.

It wasn't much to show for 18 months' work, and we're concerned that, with a planning application possible before the end of the year, the design option illustrated will de facto become the only option. We don't believe that's the way to win wide support for the project, and have written to the Trustees to say so. We've also suggested that they share their environmental surveys with the public; investigate land-based educational, training and/or therapeutic activities to replace the present farm; and clarify the financial and operational basis of the project.

Signature Senior Lifestyle have consulted us about their proposed new 100-bed care home on the long-neglected Marie Foster Home site. (See Page 8) The sketch designs appear to fit sensitively into Wood Street & Cattley Close. A planning application is expected soon.

Three year ago we supported a plan for housing and affordable workspace on the Brake Shear House site. The property was sold on to Shanly Homes, who've now submitted a new application. More units are proposed – 68 flats: 40% affordable, and a few with gardens – plus affordable workspace. The design lacks the individuality of the previous scheme and would rise to five stories, but is sensible and almost invisible from the High Street. We're minded to support it. We need more homes, and would prefer them here rather than, say, at Whalebones.



Design for the Whalebones Estate

Other casework highlights:

APPROVED

5 Fitzjohn Avenue (formerly Barnet College's Graseby House) – We welcome this conversion into housing for nurses and a counselling/therapy centre.



The Physic Well – We're delighted that the Council is now restoring this historic landmark.



The Council has pledged to restore the Physic Well

REFUSED

70 High Street (fka After Office Hours) – An extra floor on top of the previously-approved redevelopment.

Fern Room site, Salisbury Road – The boxy design didn't relate well to the Victorian houses.

WITHDRAWN

141-143 High Street – We objected to four stories of offices and flats behind these shops.

Avalon, Rowley Lane – A gross parody of a Classical palazzo that might suit the Mediterranean but not semi-rural Arkle. We said so, and the developer has taken the hint.

APPEAL DISMISSED

Moxon & Tapster Street (former Royal British Legion) – Having scored just one success out of four applications, the developer hoped in vain to add a third floor.

33 Lyonsdown Road – The appeal to replace this attractive Victorian villa with 22 flats was dismissed by the Inspector. Unfortunately that doesn't guarantee its preservation.

AWAITING A DECISION

1 Sunset View – We've nominated this fine Arts & Crafts house in the Monken Hadley Conservation Area for the Local List. A large extension was thrown out in June, thanks partly to our presentation to the planning committee. A smaller one has now been submitted, to which we've also objected.

110 Meadway (Pavilion Study Centre) – We objected to the addition of a utilitarian prefab on this Green Belt site. We sympathise with the school's need to expand, but not like this.

Meadow Works, Prickler's Hill – An application to sweep away these small businesses in favour of 57 flats in 3 & 4-storey rectangular blocks. Smaller than the previous proposal, but still quite alien to the 2-storey houses around it. We've objected again.

85 High Street (fka Lloyds Bank) – We object to the proposed glass door and signage out of keeping with this dignified Neo-Georgian building.

It's all to play for

In May the Council asked for suggestions to improve the Barnet and King George V Playing Fields in the Dollis Valley, and studied the feasibility of new community sport and leisure facilities there. The consultation received almost zero publicity, so we had no time to respond collectively.

Ironically, the Council then invited the Society's comments on its draft Statement of Community Involvement – some 40 pages of good intentions, somewhat at odds with our experience in practice. I'm grateful to the Committee members who helped me put together a detailed response.

In July, Town Team members and I guided several senior planners and officers on a walkabout of the town centre. We asked for more joined-up Council support, but they seemed more interested in the development value of our car parks.

On a more cheerful note, the Council has agreed to more trees on Barnet Hill (see story on P6)



King George V Playing Fields



QE Girls' School and 1 Sunset View, two local buildings that we have nominated for the Local List



Last Call for Listings

Robin Bishop

Nominate your favourite unsung architectural or historical buildings

Over the last year, Barnet Society members have contributed dozens of nominations to the Council's update of its Local List of buildings of architectural and historical significance. This gives a measure of protection from redevelopment (and supplements Historic England's National List of Grade I & II buildings and sites).

However, parts of Chipping Barnet are under-represented. Particularly at risk are areas around transport hubs, where the Mayor of London wants to focus redevelopment over coming years. Can you help fill these gaps?

The List will be finalised at the end of this month. If you have any suggestions, especially within a half-mile radius of High Barnet, New Barnet or Totteridge & Whetstone Stations, please contact me at robin.bishop@gmx.co.uk or 07913 107046 by Monday 24th September.

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It's an ill wind that that blows nobody any good

One happy consequence of the controversial Ark Pioneer Academy, now under construction on the former Barnet Football Club ground, will be the planting of new trees on Barnet Hill – the latest in a 20-year campaign by Barnet Society Vice President David Lee, writes Robin Bishop

Because the Academy will generate more vehicle and pedestrian traffic at the junction of the A1000, Underhill & Fairfield Way – which is already congested at peak times – the Council plans to widen the junction. A lane will be added to each road, which will necessitate felling several of the splendid Norway Maples and London Planes that line the A1000.

When junction widening was mooted, the Society drew attention to the need to replace them. So we were pleasantly surprised when, in February, the Council's Trees and Woodlands Manager invited David to draw up more extensive planting proposals. He was probably expecting a few sketches, maybe on the back of an envelope.

That's not David's way, however. Working from home, aged 88, with failing eyesight – and without an accurate large-scale survey, let alone the benefit of computer-aided design technology – he drew by hand detailed plans for each zone of the hillside, together with a schedule of tree species and quantities. It was an impressively thorough piece of work: typical of the man, and a fitting conclusion to his work in Barnet – if, that is, he ever decides to retire.

After overcoming these and other hurdles, last month we negotiated an agreement with the Council for the first phase of David's concept, the planting of 20 trees (17 new and 3 existing ones re-sited). We hope that more will follow when funding allows.



The Council has agreed to plant 20 trees along Barnet Hill



David Lee with Society member Jenny Remfry

David describes what he was seeking to achieve in these words:

"When I first visited Barnet Hill in the 1950s, I was struck by how bleak it was, particularly in winter. Moving locally in the '80s, I regularly walked across it and suffered the winds which swept through. I started thinking about remedial trees but it was not until, as a Barnet Society representative on the (then) Town Centre Forum, that I was able to make meaningful proposals. The Council was receptive, and in January 1999 nearly 50 trees were planted including the London Planes and Norway Maples from the railway bridge to Milton Avenue and those in the lower High Street.

At the time, it was not possible to plant in front of 'The Old Red Lion' public house, but I always hoped that there would be a chance later on. In 2016 the pub was demolished and six houses built. Earlier this year we got Council agreement that planting there would be suitable, and so you may expect another Plane.

They have also agreed in principle to a longer-term planting programme across Underhill and Barnet Hill, starting this autumn. The green space above Milton Avenue will have two more Hawthorns to fill a gap, and Holly, Maple, Tulip Tree and Wild Cherry will be among the newcomers lower down. Four struggling Maples alongside the A1000 will be replaced to match the rest, and three re-located in more suitable positions.

The Council's stringent spending regime means that my rather grander proposals have had to be 'hard pruned'. Because of the threats of Ash Dieback and Oak Processionary Moth, I have also regrettably been unable to use either species. I hope that future visitors will find the results agreeable nonetheless. We are lucky to have some local 'extras'. Two unusual features are the bustling but rather untamed green frontage to High Barnet Station and the magnificent group of London Planes alongside Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School. Liquidambar planted by the Council are welcome and take us on up the hill. We still hope to fill a gap or two including the space in front of the old Court House (now flats) where our previous trees became casualties of road widening near the Police Station.

With the Churchyard trees following on, and the proposed High Street planting, my 1998 suggestion to the Town Centre Forum that 'that 'between the railway bridge and Hadley we should never be out of sight of a tree' will perhaps be achieved.

Please let us have any ideas for other locations. Every tree can earn its keep, not least in the fight against atmospheric pollution."

Requiem for Cromer Road tree

A much-loved oak tree near Cromer Road primary school has been chopped down by the council without any warning, *writes Simon Cohen.*

Generations of pupils had climbed and played around the tree and ironically a couple of months before it was cut down, the school held a "celebration" in its honour. They decorated and celebrated the tree, and every year-5 pupil gave the tree a hug. This year each class is named after a tree.

Two months later the tree was cut down. No one thought to tell the school. One day the it was there, the next it was gone.

Now all that is left is a sad-looking stump where once this mighty oak once was.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident and people have to be alert to the dangers facing our much-loved trees.

Barnet is blessed with a wonderful variety of trees, but their continued existence cannot be taken for granted as a combination of council apathy and various developments pose a threat.

I was recently involved in demonstrating my love for street trees, together with some of my near neighbours, like Betty Fanning, who has lived on Potters Road all her life. She told how she loved the oak tree by St Mark's Church across the road from her home, and how she had watched it grow, as she and the neighbourhood grew with it. Sadly, my street has no street trees on it, and the very occasional front garden trees that we do have always seem to be under threat, as properties change hands and new owners consider concrete block paving to be a better choice for a front garden than soft planting and a tree that makes our neighbourhood a desirable place to live.

Around this time there were two other stories I heard. First was the large-scale felling of street trees in Sheffield by the local authority and their subcontractor AMY Plc. There have been many protests against the scale and method of this process, and I became concerned that if we are not careful Barnet may suffer a similar fate, as Barnet Council and their out-sourced subcontractors face more and increasing pressure to make savings.

The second story was that the Woodlands Trust were trying to promote Street Trees with their, We Love Street Trees Campaign. I thought it made sense to bring all these stories together, and asked them if we could be a part of the campaign. They sent us some materials and I knocked on a few doors and we arranged a little party at Betty's oak tree, which stands proudly on the top of a rise at a prominent bend in the road.

In the weeks before our celebration was to take place at Betty's Oak, Virgin Media dug trenches directly under the canopy of the tree, cutting through hundreds of roots and ignoring various industry guidelines, whilst installing the new Virgin Broadband service.

Utility companies like Virgin Media have a statutory duty to provide utilities, but are predominantly concerned more with profit than people. Trees come very low down in the list of concerns. Some fast-acting neighbours and I managed to stop the works until a proper inspection could take place by one of our local Tree Officers. He pointed out that mechanical diggers should not have been used and hand digging was required. Although roots had been damaged, sadly, he allowed the works to continue. A few weeks later, we had been left with three new junction boxes and large areas of concrete directly under the canopy, which we all found to be very upsetting, especially as with just a little forward planning this potentially lethal damage to the oak could have been avoided.

We went ahead and had our little tree celebration party with neighbours and friends.



Woodman, spare that tree: Before and after pictures of the tree

We even asked various Council employees to attend but nobody came. We decorated the tree, had a drink some cake, and made a toast to the Oak's future good health, and thanks for all it had given to our neighbourhood already.

I tell these stories because there is a lesson to be learnt. We very often realise too late the importance of something we take for granted, something we love or grew up with and want to share with others and with future generations. It is all too easy to take our environment for granted. And if we are not very careful we will cut off our noses to spite our faces.

We give our Council authority to act on our behalf, but it is still incumbent upon us to ensure that they are doing the job we want them to do. Broadband – yes, but not at the expense of our environment. We are very lucky to live in such a beautiful area and we have many wonderful trees, but we must make it very clear that these trees are fundamental to why we live in this area. We have lost many trees in Barnet Vale over the last few months, some of which were old, diseased or dangerous, but we must ensure that what is removed is replaced.

So with all that in mind, I think we should be proactive and remind our local councillors that we love our environment. Specifically, if there are any trees that you think are of particular importance to our area, a tree that gives a sense of place, history or belonging, or that has a significant environmental importance, then please let the Council know. These could be street trees, woodland, backland or garden trees. It's important to appreciate that most trees aren't protected by TPOs (tree preservation orders) as they make it more difficult to carry out routine maintenance.

There are many opportunities for us to get more trees planted in Barnet. The Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission and The Tree Council all offer help, and recently the new Tree Champion, Sir William Worsley, current Chair of the National Forest Company, has been tasked with setting a bold direction for the country's forests and woodlands over the next 25 years and supporting the Government's manifesto commitments to plant 11 million trees, plus a further one million in our towns and cities. He needs our help and support. So do the trees.

Angry reaction over exclusion from Barnet Hospital CPZ

Residents in four roads that were hoping to be included in the new Barnet Hospital controlled parking zone have been told they may have to wait until early next year before they can be incorporated into the scheme, writes Nick Jones

A CPZ for ten roads around the hospital takes effect on Monday 10 September following a lengthy campaign for parking restrictions to be introduced in streets off Wellhouse Lane, Bells Hill and Wood Street.

A speeded-up consultation was promised for an extension of the new CPZ to take in Kings Road, Cavendish Road, Grimsdyke Crescent and Jennings Way. But Barnet Council now says that the legal process of consultation was not completed in time.

As a result of the delay, householders believe their four roads will now be filled up with parked cars of hospital staff and visitors. Their vote in favour of the CPZ will now be considered by the council's area committee on 4 October. If there are no objections, and the extension to the scheme was approved, it could take effect by the end of this year or early next year.

Approval for the Barnet Hospital CPZ was given in mid-February. It is by far the largest extension to parking restrictions in High Barnet in recent years and will impose CPZ restrictions (from 8am to 6.30pm, Monday to Saturday) on ten roads:

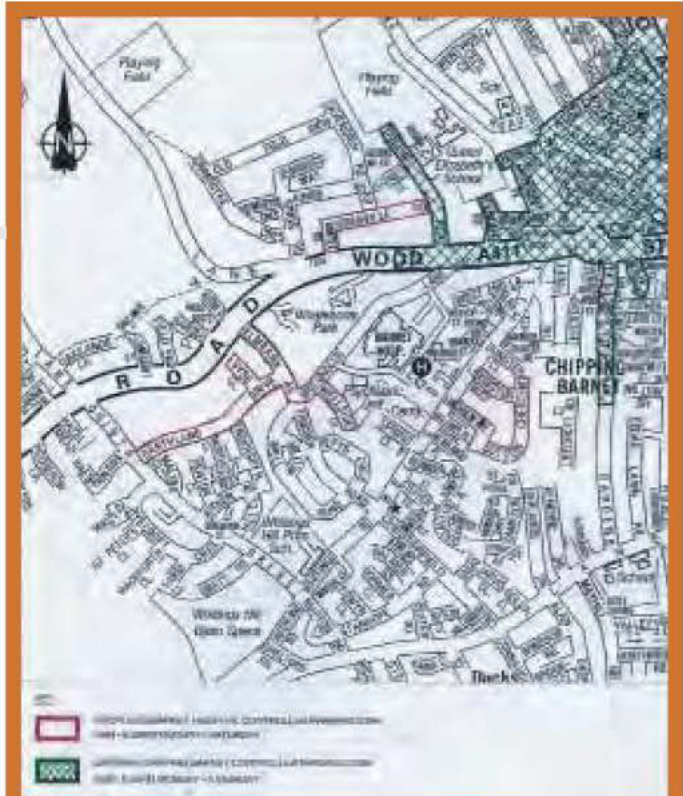
Wellhouse Lane (lower end), Wellside Close, Elmbank Avenue, Vyse Close, Garthland Drive, Sutton Crescent, Lingholm Way, Lexington Way, Granville Road, and Argyle Road.

Residents in the four roads affected by the delay have complained to Councillor David Longstaff, one of the three High Barnet ward councillors, and to the committee chairman, Councillor Stephen Sowerby. Householders say the failure to include their roads in the scheme – especially after the residents voted decisively for a CPZ – is “a very serious matter”.

Their fear is that all the parked cars of hospital staff and visitors that will be displaced when the CPZ takes effect will “flood” in to their roads and cause “absolute chaos”. They believe failure to include their roads in the hospital CPZ is in breach of the area committee's decision in February and the promise to fast-track consultation for their roads.

Councillor Longstaff has told the residents that the council is blaming the delay on the council elections in May which disrupted work on the design and implementation of the CPZ. He had assumed that the extension of the CPZ scheme to include the four additional roads would be done at the “same time to minimise the disruption and costs” but this request appeared to have been ignored.

“It is frustrating that this hasn't taken place at the speed I requested...The officers decided to wait until after the local election ‘purdah’ period for the consultation, a decision which knocks all the timings back.



Kings Road and Grimsdyke Crescent are two of roads which the residents fear will now become an unofficial car park for staff and visitors at Barnet Hospital. Grimsdyke Crescent is one of the roads where angry residents are complaining at Barnet Council's delay in imposing a controlled parking zone.

“There is no way to circumvent the legal process. The results must go to the next area committee for decision.”

In his response, Councillor Sowerby accepts that highways officers “could perhaps have acted a bit quicker” but the residents affected will have to wait only a few more weeks for a final decision.

He rejected their request for the whole of the Barnet Hospital CPZ scheme to be delayed saying that this would incur the “vehement displeasure” of those residents who have campaigned for so long for some relief from the problems caused by hospital parking.

Despite the councillors' re-assurances that an extension of the CPZ might be only months away, the residents are asking whether the failure to complete the implementation of the extension to the CPZ, as agreed in February, is due to maladministration by Re, the partnership between the council and the outsourcing company Capita, which is responsible for highways within the borough.

The council has admitted that the highways service is one where “performance improvement is needed” and the council is considering whether to return supervision of highways to the council along with several other services including finance, land and property management, strategic planning and cemeteries and crematoriums.

Queen's Representative helps give QE Girls' Summer Fair a boost



To help celebrate the school's 130th anniversary, pupils at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, Barnet, organised a wide range of events for their summer fair.

Martin Russell, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Barnet, praised the school for its recent academic successes. He was welcomed by the headteacher, Violet Walker.

As the Queen's representative, Mr Russell said it was most appropriate that he should be a guest at the fair. "I must admit it's the first time I have been to the school as deputy lord lieutenant and I do wish all the pupils well."

QE Girls' headteacher, Violet Walker, welcomed Mr Russell to an event that helped to celebrate the school's success in becoming the country's highest achieving wholly non-selective all-girls state school.

QE Girls' group, Not Quite Sure, entertained parents and visitors at a summer fair celebrating the school's 130th anniversary. Martin Russell, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Barnet, was guest of honour at QE Girls' summer fair. (from left to right), Rebecca Hanley, chair of QE Girls' trustees, Martin Russell, Royden Gothelf, chair of QE Girls' Trust, and Violet Walker, headteacher Charlotte Austin, community connector, at the Young Barnet Foundation's stand at QE Girls' summer fair

In recognition of its success, the school was chosen earlier this year to host a government announcement to recruit youth democracy ambassadors.

Mrs Walker said the backing for QE Girls' from the Minister for the Constitution, Chloe Smith, was all the more important as it helped to mark the 100th anniversary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act giving women the right to vote.



Not Quite Sure

QE Girls' was founded in 1888 and the 130th anniversary fete reinforced the tradition of QE as a wholly non-selective school. Among those entertaining parents and visitors was the school group, Not Quite Sure.

The fair was organised by QEGSA, the school's parent teacher association. Among the stalls was a stand for the Young Barnet Foundation which is helping organisations that support young people in the borough.

"So far we have signed up over 140 organisations that cater for youngsters aged between five and 25. We are ready to offer them expertise if they need to raise money or their profile," said Charlotte Austin, the foundation's community connector.

For further information see info@youngbarnetfoundation.org.uk



Charlotte Austin

£22 million care home for Marie Foster site

Views of nearby residents and businesses are to be taken into account in drawing up a planning application for a 100-bed care home for the elderly on the site of the former Marie Foster Centre in Wood Street, Barnet, writes Nick Jones

Signature Senior Lifestyle are purchasing the site from NHS Property Services — subject to obtaining planning permission — and the developers say they are proposing a design that would be compatible with the Wood Street conservation area.

Plans and artists' impressions were on public display at Chipping Barnet Library, and groups such as the Barnet Society and Barnet Residents Association were among those asked to comment.

If approval is obtained by the end of the year, construction of the £22 million care home should start in late spring or early summer, ready for completion by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

The new home, of two to three storeys in height, would offer studio flats, and one-bedroom flats suitable for couples, together with a secure dementia wing.

Facilities would include a ground floor café and restaurant, a second-floor bistro, community area suitable for events, and a small cinema.

The main entrance to the home would be via Cattley Close, resulting in the closure of the existing Wood Street access. The new home would face Wood Street and is being designed to sit closely on the existing footprint of the Marie Foster Centre and the derelict former nurses' home.



“The new home would front on to Wood Street but there will be a green space in front and gardens at the side and rear. We will keep the existing trees”

A garden at the rear of the 2.5-acre site would be kept as an open green space, although some of it would be converted into a 47-space car park for staff and visitors.

Signature currently operate ten care homes, including one at Hertford, and seven more are either under construction or are about to be built. The latest to be completed is at Bushey, and work has started on another nearby home involving the conversion and expansion of the David Roe, head of land and planning for Signature, said the company had already

been in consultation with Barnet Council and their latest proposals for the site reflected the wish of the council to preserve the gardens and create access to the home via Cattley Close rather than Wood Street.

“The new home would front on to Wood Street but there will be a green space in front and gardens at the side and rear. We will keep the existing trees.

“Our aim is to build a home that is sympathetic to the conservation area and especially neighbouring buildings across Wood Street, including two rows of historic almshouses.”



From left to right, Robin Bishop, chair, Barnet Society, David Roe, head of land and planning for Signature Senior Lifestyle, and Markus Geiger, one of the society's architectural advisers

Best ever Barnet Classic Car show

A joint display of classic cars and vintage armoured vehicles drew record crowds to the fifth annual Barnet Classic Car show at the Army Reserve Centre in St Albans Road, writes Nick Jones

Classic car enthusiasts and army reservists from the Barnet area joined together to celebrate Armed Forces Day and to raise money for the Army Benevolent Fund.

The reserve centre's parade ground provided an ideal location for a display of well over 40 classic cars and motorcycles alongside a range of military vehicles including a Land Rover used by the Honourable Artillery Corps for ceremonial duties and heavy-duty army lorries.

The only hitch was caused by roadworks near the Red Lion public house which slowed down the procession of classic cars up Barnet Hill and along the High Street towards St Albans Road.



Classic cars on display at the Army Reserve Centre in St Albans Road in support of Armed Forces Day

Major Balchin and Chris and Diane Nightingale were both full of praise for all the hard work done behind the scenes by Corporal MacLeod of the regimental recruiting team.

Leading the procession of classic cars up the High Street was Graham Paddon's Jaguar Silverstone and in the rear was Chris Nightingale in his Mini-Cooper in Aston Martin racing green (registration POP 22).

Mr Nightingale, now a part-time lecturer in mechanical engineering, helped his father convert POP 22 and his wife Diane says the car is his "pride and joy".

One early arrival was Brian White in his 1931 Singer Junior, which cost £150 when new. Various attractions were laid on the by reservists, including a display of continuous cycling.



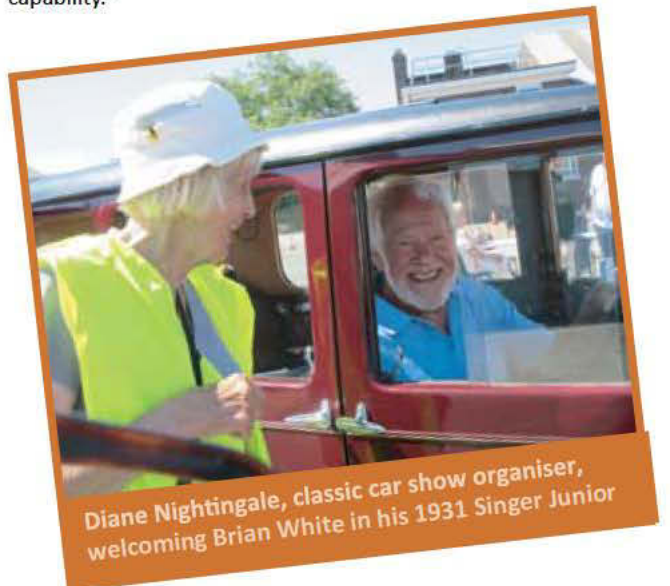
One of the reservists, Lance Corporal Senol Hussein brought along a friend's ice cream van and did busy trade in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund.

Chris and Diane Nightingale, long-standing organisers of classic car events, were delighted by the turnout and the offer to hold the display on the parade ground – a far more spacious location than the area around Barnet Market and the bandstand.

"The Army Reservists were keen to help and by linking up we have been able to put on our best-ever show. Quite a few vintage cars came along at the last minute, once the owners heard the show was taking place."

Major Andrew Balchin, officer commanding of the Barnet 240 Squadron Royal Logistic Corps, 151 Regiment, said he was sure the Reserve Centre would be happy to co-operate again and mount another joint show on Armed Forces Day next year.

The Barnet centre is home to around 50 Army reservists who all have civilian jobs. Major Balchin is a teacher at Cranborne Primary School, Potters Bar, "Reservists provide a link between the regular army and the civilian community and we are keen to raise awareness of the military in the public eye, so joining up with a classic car display gives us a chance to show the public the Army's capability."



Diane Nightingale, classic car show organiser, welcoming Brian White in his 1931 Singer Junior

Founder remembered at Arts Exhibition

Barnet Guild of Artists' 70th annual summer exhibition was dedicated to its founder, Gwyneth Cowing, who in 1948 brought together a group of local artists to stage their first show at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School.

A water colour portrait, and some of her own paintings, took pride of place among a bumper display of 170 entries.

At a preview of the exhibition, held at the Pennefather Hall, St Albans Road, the guild's chair, Nichola Hunt, told members and friends that the guild wanted to take it her opportunity to pay tribute to the late Miss Cowing.

"We owe her so much, and this is our chance to remember her vision and her work," said Ms Hunt.

In addition to the portrait, the display featured some of Miss Cowing's work, including her 1967 oil painting "September Morning" which looks across the fields towards the farm at her former home Whalebones, where she built a studio for the guild in the 1960s.

Miss Cowing's trustees are currently drawing up plans to redevelop the Whalebones woods and farmland with an estate of up to 180 homes, two new green spaces and footpaths from Wood Street to both Barnet Hospital and the Wellhouse Lane bus terminal.

Ms Hunt said the trustees' plans include the construction of a new studio for the guild, as well as space for the Barnet Beekeepers Association.

"The trustees are recommending that the guild seeks charitable status in the hope the trustees can then gift us the new studio.

"We are preparing to become a charity, but clearly any new building erected by the trustees might have a wider community use, so we shall have to wait to see what transpires if the trustees secure planning permission for their redevelopment."

Councillor David Longstaff, a former Mayor of Barnet, opened the exhibition and praised guild members for their enthusiasm and dedication. He paid tribute to the work of the guild's former treasurer and vice chair, the late Fred Howett.

"I first met Fred in 1994 and he did so much to keep the guild together and on an even keel. He was a great organiser of local art exhibitions and his advice and support is sadly missed."

A display of Mr Howett's pictures included a water colour of Barnet parish church. An innovation this year was a display of two abstract paintings by local artist Dan Kirschner which he hoped would be studied and viewed while listening to music.

"I put my vision to what I hear, and I hope viewers will share the experience and enjoy the music which inspired me," said Mr Kirschner.

The two abstracts on display are Improvisation on Pines of Rome by Respigi (an abstract in acrylic on canvas in four columns representing the four movements), and Improvisation on Balero by Ravel which includes a portrait of the conductor Valery Gergiev, in acrylic and oil on canvas.

Another highlight of the exhibition were caricatures by the illustrator Simon Ellinas.



A portrait of founder Gwyneth Cowing and some of her paintings took pride of place at the 70th annual summer exhibition of the Barnet Guild of Artists, opened by Councillor David Longstaff, former Mayor of Barnet. From left to right, Nichola Hunt, guild chair, David Longstaff and Gillian Longstaff

2018 Annual General Meeting

The Barnet Society AGM was held in Christ Church on 14th June, and was attended by 46 members.

Councillor and former Mayor David Longstaff gave a talk on the work of the Chipping Barnet Town Team, which he chairs, and on future developments in Chipping Barnet, which was followed by a lively Q&A.

The Annual Report and Accounts (published in the last Newsletter) were approved, and the following Committee members elected:

Nick Jones (Vice Chair), Jonathan Supran (Secretary), Mary Pettinger (formerly Carroll, Treasurer), Frances Wilson (Minutes Secretary), Eamonn Rafferty (Newsletter Editor), Simon Cohen, Andrew Hutchings, Gail Laser, Susan Skedd and Jessica Vamathevan.

Robin Bishop (Chair) and John Hay (Membership Secretary) remain in post from previous elections.

Jim Nelhams was re-elected Independent Examiner for 2018-19.

Membership News - May 2018

First of all, a warm welcome to all our new members who've joined since the last membership news update.

It has been a very busy few months on the membership front as we've been completely overhauling the Membership Database to make things much quicker and more efficient. There are lots of snazzy new features which help us with the membership statistics but most importantly produce the letters of various types I have to send out. No doubt you may well have received one from me by now in some form or other. My thanks to Derek Epstein for many hours of work and early mornings and loads of emails. We abandoned the FileMaker Pro Software as it wasn't right for us.

This leads me nicely on to an even more efficient, quicker and cheaper method of sending some of the letters, mainly those that don't require sending back forms or subscription payments.

It costs around 90p to produce and send a letter to a member, emailing is free. I will

introduce this where I can, but out of the current 609 members we have, only 328 have supplied email addresses. I had to send out 60 GDPR Reminder letters this quarter too, and 16 members never responded at all. If we can get more members to take out a Standing Order for renewals, we would save a fortune and be able to keep the subscription at a low rate.

Email: membership@barnetsociety.org.uk
Phone: 07717 195662

John Hay, Membership Secretary

New Treasurer Needed

Mary Pettinger is stepping down as Treasurer in April 19 so if you would be interested in becoming Treasurer – or know another member who might – please contact the Chair at robin.bishop@gmx.co.uk

Familiarity with book-keeping and Excel is needed.

