

Planning and Environment report

Sunset View appeal is test case for the Society as we nominated it for Barnet's Local List. If the appeal is upheld, it will undermine a basic principle of a Conservation Area

Robin Bishop writes:



No major new projects have come forward since the last Newsletter, and recent major applications seem stuck in the planning pipeline – but we've been kept busy.

Ones to watch

High Street pedestrian improvements

– The good news is that these seem likely to go ahead once Virgin have laid their broadband cable in February. Less good news is that it will be late in the season to plant the trees, and that other details have not yet been agreed – for example, where to place benches and Battle of Barnet information boards (for which the Barnet Museum has succeeded in raising funds).

Whalebones estate – We met the developer again in December, and an exhibition of the proposed housing and public park is due to be held in February (See separate article, Page 5).

Hertsmere Council has consulted on building up to 2,620 new homes between the M25 and Potters Bar, from South Mimms to beyond Junction 24. This would have a huge impact on our Green Belt, and we have objected forcefully (see Page 5).

Other casework highlights:

Approved

When I Grow Up, 204 High Street – We supported this imaginative proposal for a family hub for 'pre-schoolers and their grown-ups' in one of Statons' redundant premises.

Moxon & Tapster Street (fka Royal British Legion) – Fifth time lucky for the developer!

Refused

141-143 High Street – We objected once again to four stories of offices and flats behind these shops. The planning committee agreed.

127 Barnet Road (fka Cottage Garden Nursery) – An application was made to replace a greenhouse in the Green Belt with a warehouse twice its volume. We strongly objected, and the committee threw it out.

№1 Station Road – The refusal of this proposed makeover was a surprise. Next to New Barnet Station seems a good place for 63 flats, and even hardcore fans of Brutalism would find it hard to love this redundant office block in its present state.

Awaiting a decision

151-153 High Street – The Bentley showroom and garage would be replaced by two shops and seven homes. We have mixed views on this. It's in the Monken Hadley Conservation Area, and while



Proposed frontage of 151-153 High Street

we welcome removal of the incongruous projecting showroom and restoration of the nationally listed №151, we have doubts about the quality of the restoration and the modern idiom of both the front extension and the rebuilt №153.

Brake Shear House site (164 High Street) – We're neutral about the 68 flats proposed.

50 St Albans Road (fka The White Lion) – We don't have a problem with converting this former pub to a car rental office with parking behind, but have objected to the demolition of the former stables. This is a locally listed building, and horses were a fundamental to the original coaching inn's purpose.

Marie Foster Home site, Wood Street – We supported this 100-place care home.

Meadow Works site, Pricklers Hill – We objected to 57 homes on this site.

Gone to appeal

1 Sunset View – A test case for the Society. We nominated the house for Barnet's Local List, and if the appeal is upheld it will undermine the basic principle of a Conservation Area. We have submitted further arguments against the planned changes to the Inspectorate.

Appeal dismissed

Fern Room site, Salisbury Road – The Inspector considered the design harmful to the character of the area. Its balconies would be 'alien' and its high proportion of glazing 'brash and visually jarring'.

Council news

Local List – The Council's updated list of buildings of architectural or historic significance has been delayed by shortage of planning resources.

Consultations – Our Committee is preparing responses to the Council's Draft Housing Strategy, Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and its review of Capita's contracts (which include Barnet's planning, regeneration and highways departments – all crucial to the quality of our buildings and environment). You can comment at <https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/>.

Trees

The Council tells us that around 20 more trees will be planted on Barnet Hill in February in consultation with our Vice President, David Lee.



View of the surviving stables behind The White Lion