

Planning & environment – Robin’s update for Committee 18 March 2021

PLANNING ISSUES

Government

1. **Permitted Development** – BSoc responded to the public consultation about expanding PD rights (i.e. to convert or extend properties without planning permission), mostly critically. Many thanks to Frances, Guy Braithwaite & Simon Kaufman for their help.
2. Other public consultations – not commented on by BSoc.
 - Introducing a **Right to Regenerate** i.e. releasing vacant/underused public property
 - Increasing the **Community Infrastructure Levy**
 - Amending the **National Planning Policy Framework** in line with the recommendations of the *Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission* &...
 - Adopting a **National Model Design Code**. (Deadline 21 March)

Surely the government’s desire to ‘build beautiful’ & its promotion of national and local design codes are at odds with its wish to expand Permitted Development Rights?

London

3. **New London Plan** – Has been (finally) approved by the Sec of State. Mayor aims to build 52,000 homes pa incl. 50% affordable (reduced from his original target of 65,000).

Council

4. **Barnet Local Plan** – The current draft is likely to be formally adopted in June.
5. **Surprising fact** – Barnet receives more planning applications than Manchester & Liverpool combined! Perhaps our planners can be excused some imperfections...
6. **‘Low-value, low-quality’ parks & open spaces**



Solar farm, Potters Bar

Barnet has denied plans to build solar farms & batteries on these.

BSoc disputed the Council’s classification method & warned of likely monetisation threats 5 years ago, before the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy was adopted.

7. **Chipping Barnet Community Plan**
 - Online exhibition attracted 750 public responses
 - BSoc submitted online, & a fuller email, responses. We supported 12 projects under 5 headings (something old, new, green, for children & for young people).
 - April – Council will propose five projects to the Town Team for detailed study.

Conservation Areas

8. **70 High Street** – Council has issued a demolition order & owner has appealed. BSoc has until 9 April to comment, and has been invited to an informal hearing (details TBC).

9. **1 Sunset View** – Planning Inspectorate decision awaited.

Major wins

10. **33 Lyonsdown Road** – Guy Braithwaite objected at Planning Cttee on behalf of BSoc. Application to replace the Locally Listed villa with 20 flats was refused unanimously.
11. **Whalebones Estate** – The developer’s appeal to Mayor for permission to build 152 homes was declined. They could still appeal to the Secretary of State.

Alternative use for community food production?



Dr Sündüs Tewfik, a BSoc member with a longstanding professional commitment to care farming, is initiating a project for the site, & plans to approach the Trustees to rent land for the remaining 46 years of the Trust.

Briefly, care farming combines organic cultivation with therapeutic activity by people with physical &/or mental difficulties to grow food for food banks and community groups. It is an approach supported by the Mayor of London & other influential organisations for its benefits for both its participants & the planet. It would have surely have appealed to Barnet Society founder Gwyneth Cowing.

Decision requested:

Do you agree that community food production is an initiative the Society should encourage, and – when the business model becomes clearer, and if the Trustees respond favourably – in due course provide publicity and support?

Major threats

12. **High Barnet & Cockfosters Station developments** – Applications still awaited; now unlikely until after the London Mayoral election (6 May).
13. **Barnet House, Whetstone**



Existing building



2017 application (refused)

New proposal for extra 2 storeys on existing slab & 263 x 1-3 bed flats (263). This is bigger & no better-designed than the 2017 application, which was refused.

Opportunity

14. **New special school, Moxon Street** – BSoc has been invited to consultation. We’ve asked for details, & whether Whalebones (probably a better site) could be considered.

RECENT CASEWORK (SELECTION)

Planning permission refused

15. **206 High Street (former Savoro)** (in CA) – Conversion to 11 flats. We didn't comment. Refused on grounds that *'loss would erode the vitality and viability of Chipping Barnet Town Centre's mix and reduce the effective functioning tourism related development'*.
16. **83 Wood Street** (in CA) – We objected to this proposed semi-basement 'studio'.



83 Wood St – proposed studio in red

17 Park Rd – 10 basement units

Planning applications approved

17. **17 Park Road** (15 bedsits on lower 2 floors of villa) – We objected, but as Permitted Development the owner's 9th attempt to cram in sub-standard units was finally allowed.
18. **151-153 High Street (former car showroom)** (in CA) – We supported this improved scheme for flats & retail.

Planning decisions awaited

19. **54A High Street** (in CA) – Probably medieval; results of dendrochronology test awaited.
20. **83 High Street (former Victoria Bakery) & 8 Union Street** (3 flats, 2 on backland) – No comment.
21. **202 High Street (former car showroom)** (in CA) (4 shops & 6 flats/mews houses) – We objected to the proposed massing, details & lack of outdoor space.
22. **39 Wood Street** (in CA) – We objected to this proposed garden studio.
23. **46 Prospect Road** – We objected to this 3-storey front, side & back extension.
24. **Western half of Meadow Works site, Pricklers Hill** (8 3-storey houses) – We supported these new family homes & gardens.

25. **Gas peaking plant, Partingdale Lane** (in GB) – We objected to this abuse of the Green Belt.
26. **Electricity battery, Partingdale Lane** (in GB) – Ditto.
27. **81 advertising banners, Barnet High Street & Hill**



We have strongly objected to this application, which would negate the decluttering achieved since 2000, be contrary to Conservation Area policy & undermine the aims of the *CB Community Plan*.

Similar applications for New Barnet, East Barnet & Whetstone haven't attracted much public protest, so we have not objected to them.

Further afield

28. **Former Homebase site, North Finchley** – Barnet has refused permission for 307 home in blocks up to 9 stories high.
29. **Hendon Hub** – We have been invited to consult about the proposed major expansion of Middlesex University on The Burroughs site, including relocation of the Central Library.

Q Anyone interested in participating?