

Planning & environment – Robin’s update for Committee 12 November 2020

PLANNING ISSUES

Council

1. **High Street**

Pedestrian improvements complete except for some remedial work.

2. **Chipping Barnet Community Plan**

- 4 January 2021 (for 6 weeks) – Online public exhibition of possible projects
- BSoc review panel – Robin, Gail, Andrew, Simons C & W
- Mid-February – Selection of five projects for detailed study (LBB & CBTT).

3. **The Government’s Planning Reforms**

With help of Susan, Frances, Simon Kaufman, Peter Jeffrey and especially Guy Braithwaite – as well as of our fellow organisations BRA, FORAB, London Forum & LGBC – I’ve submitted the following responses to the Government’s various proposals:

- a. *Proposed Changes to the Current Planning System*, objecting particularly to the algorithm for assessing and allocating housing targets.
- b. Answers to standard questionnaire on the *Planning White Paper* proposals.
- c. Detailed (10-page) critique of the *PWP*. Here’s a summary:

Aspects of the *PWP* that we support

- Some streamlining of the planning system
- Better enforcement of planning law
- Recognition of the need to upskill and adequately resource the planning service.

Aspects of the *PWP* about which we have particular concerns

- Its basic premise that the present planning system is outdated and ineffective
- Excessive focus on housing, and especially the market sector
- Too little regard to wider planning challenges of the 21st century
- Significant omissions
- Disruption
- Delivery
- Public consultation.

Conclusion

The *PWP*’s proposed reforms purport to be radical in scope and effectiveness. In reality, it fires a scatter-gun of remedies at a limited – and sometimes imagined – set of problems.

It barely addresses the realities of a post-Covid world on the edge of a climate emergency.

It risks major disruption to a system that is not perfect, but is capable of fine-tuning. We don’t need ‘world-class’ solutions; ones that simply work better would be welcome.

In the short term, it risks failing to meet the housing target the Government sets itself. In the longer term, it risks undermining public faith in planning.

There is time to rethink, and we urge the Government to do so.

Our comments were generally consistent with most other national and local amenity groups and professional bodies. Severe criticisms have also been voiced by many MPs including Theresa Villiers and other Outer London and Home Counties MPs.

TfL

4. **High Barnet & Cockfosters Station housing developments** – Unofficial indications are that planning applications may be submitted in January.
5. **Arnos Grove Station housing development** – Decision still awaited.
6. **383 bus** – Extended to Finchley Memorial Hospital.

RECENT CASEWORK (SELECTION)

Planning permission refused

7. **Whalebones Estate** – Permission for 152 homes refused by Chair's casting vote after 5:5 split. Following technical glitches, my objection on grounds of overdevelopment and breach of Conservation Area and other policies was read out by Nick Saul.
8. **186 High Street (Painted Pot)** – Following discussion at the last Committee meeting we objected to its change to residential use.

Planning appeals refused

9. **127 Barnet Road (former Cottage Garden Nursery)** – We had objected to an oversized replacement shed in the Green Belt.
10. **Hadley Hotel, Hadley Road** – We had objected to the proposed roof extension.

Withdrawn

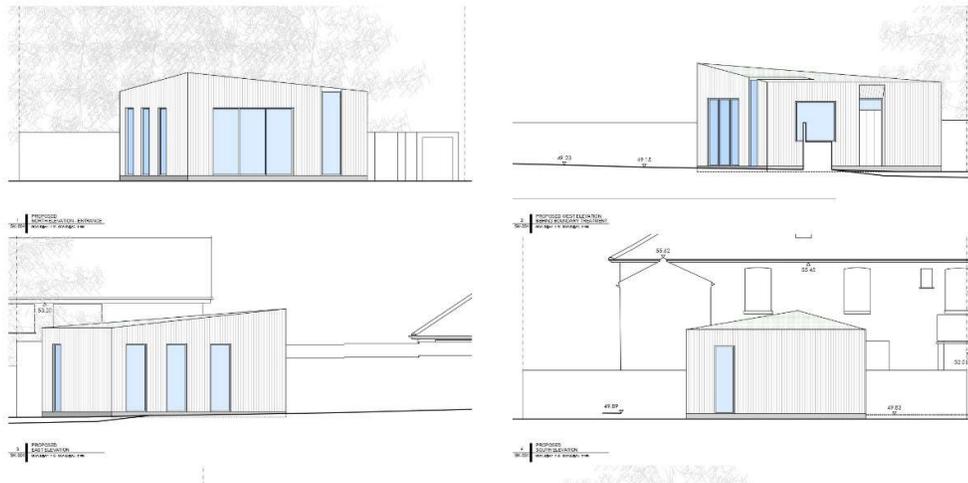
11. **35-37 Station Road** – We objected to this badly designed proposal for assisted living in a pair of Victorian semi-detached houses on the Local List.
12. **Holland House, Queens Road** – We objected to this application for a school and respite care in a former industrial building because it provided no information on how it would meet DfE & CQC guidelines, e.g. on accessibility, WCs and outdoor play area.
13. **10 Great North Road** – We objected to this 2-storey 'coach-house' replacing a garage.

Planning decisions awaited

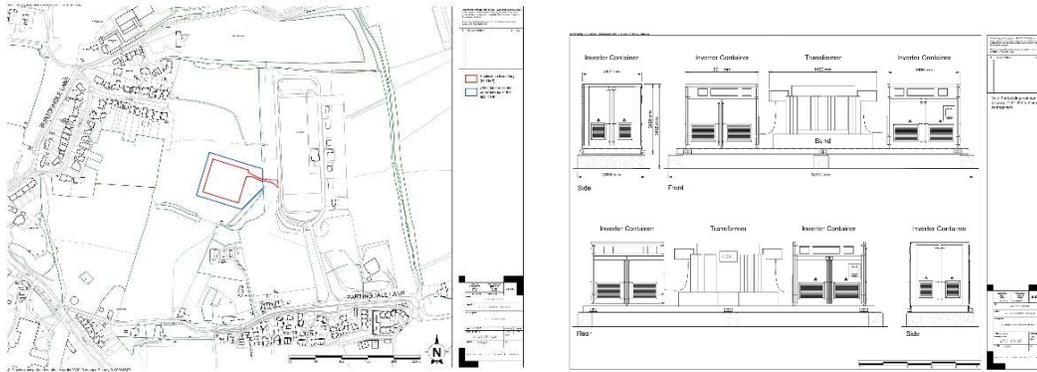
14. **151-153 High Street (former car showroom)** – We supported this improved scheme.
15. **83 High Street (former Victoria Bakery) & 8 Union Street** – This would provide two flats on backland and convert the 1st floor office into a flat. It would have no visual impact on the High Street and very little on Union Street, so we have no comment.
16. **206 High Street (former Savoro)** – Proposal to convert restaurant and hotel behind into 11 flats. No comment is proposed.
17. **50 Moxon Street** – The latest in a series of co-working and co-living schemes for this former office block. We've been consulted at every stage and are minded to approve it.



18. **41 Wood Street** – We've objected to the poor design of this new house in the garden of a Locally Listed Building in the Wood Street Conservation Area. The architect claims it would 'compliment' the 'mixture of styles found within the architectural vernacular of surrounding properties within the street scene'. 'Insult' would be a more suitable verb.



19. **83 Wood Street** – We've objected to a proposed semi-basement 'studio' with one small window at pavement level. More like a dungeon.
20. **Former Arkley Riding School site, Hedgerow Lane** – We've objected to four new houses on this Green Belt site.
21. **Gas peaking plant, Partingdale Lane** – We objected to this abuse of the Green Belt.
22. **Electricity battery, Partingdale Lane** – Ditto.



Conservation Areas

- 23. **70 High Street** – The developer’s survey dimensions have been found to be inaccurate. The Council is considering a demolition order.
- 24. **1 Sunset View** – The Council has served enforcement orders.
- 25. **54A High Street** – Frame now thought to be Medieval. Results of dendrochronology test awaited.

Other cases

- 26. **Tudor Park Pavilion** – Simon C drafting a proposal for CIL funding for the estimated £180k of repairs needed
- 27. **Brake Shear House gates** – We supported the 2016 plans to open up a view from the High Street. The site was then sold on to Shanly Homes, who kept to the general concept including the view through the site. They have recently received planning permission to shut it off with a gate. We have got the Town Team to write to Shanly Homes asking them to reconsider their proposal.



London Green Belt Council

- 28. Derek rationalised its membership database last summer. His offer to continue maintaining it has been welcomed.