

Save New Barnet

Newsletter

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20th February 2017

Hello again, friends of the Save New Barnet Campaign. Once again, just one major item of news.

Victoria Quarter - Amendment to Planning Application

You will recall that One Housing, the owners of the gasworks site in Albert Road, submitted a planning application to Barnet Council in December for their 'gateway' addition to the already consented Victoria Quarter scheme. There were 118 objections registered online by local residents before the deadline for comments in mid January.

One Housing have now submitted an amendment to this planning application in an attempt to address some of the issues raised. Sadly they have not gone nearly far enough with their changes.

The Save New Barnet Campaign has examined the amendments to this planning application and it remains our view that it should be REFUSED in its present form.

We recommend that you contact Barnet Council with your comments, and to register your objection. The deadline for public comments is Monday 6 March. Details of how to submit your opinion to Barnet Council can be found towards the end of this newsletter.

Along with a few fairly minor changes to design details, the main difference proposed is in the height and position of building H. This block would replace the three 2 storey houses and the old Burlington Coachworks building in Victoria Road, between Albert Road and the footpath down to Victoria Recreation Ground.

Spot The Difference



Original proposal

Amended proposal

Height of Building H

As originally proposed, building H would have risen to a height of 6 storeys on the corner of Victoria and Albert Roads, with 5 storeys fronting the rest of each road. By removing 5 flats from the development, block H is reduced to 5 storeys fronting Albert Road, dropping to 4 storeys along some of the Victoria Road frontage. This height remains unacceptable.

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It is worth noting that many of the objections stated how impressed they were by the Tesco/Spenn Hill scheme built on the former OpTex site in Victoria Road. Here modern houses had positively added to the street scene by respecting the roof lines and building lines of the existing houses, with slightly taller buildings kept further back inside the site.

One Housing should be using their 'gateway' scheme as an intermediary between the existing properties in Victoria Road and the large already consented development on the main gasworks site. Even with the partial loss of one floor, Block H is still far too high and dominant. It would be a highly aggressive intruder into the street scene.

Position of Building H

The existing 2 storey properties to be demolished by this scheme are set back around 6 m from the pavement edge, with gardens or forecourts in front. All the current structures in Victoria Road follow this very clear building line. In their original proposals, the 6 storey block H would have been built immediately adjacent to the narrow pavement, completely ignoring the established building line. In the amended proposal they are very keen to show how they are going to widen the pavement by 80 cm. This would be achieved by slicing 30 cm from the already tiny front yards of the 3 proposed ground floor flats, and moving the entire building back just 50 cm. This would still mean this tall building would be sited around 5 m forward of the established building line.

The justification for this position has to be seen to be believed. Instead of using the very clear and long established building line, the developers have decided to invent their own by drawing a line from the front of the Railway Bell Public House. Yes, by using the position of a pub in East Barnet Road, they have somehow created a 'new' building line for Victoria Road! This random line seems to have absolutely no connection with any existing building in Victoria Road, however their proposed block H now appears to be located just behind it. How very convenient.

Allowing a developer to ignore established building lines and simply invent their own would set an appalling precedent for the future.

Building A

The tallest building on the consented scheme (which they already have planning permission to build) was the 6 storey block A. The 'gateway' application redesigned this building and added two more floors to raise it up to 8 storeys. We are very disappointed to see that the amended plan does not remove these two extra floors.

Amended Planning Application (16/7601/FUL)

Proposal:

"Demolition of the existing residential and non-residential buildings (1 to 9 Victoria Road, 15 to 23 Victoria Road and 1A, 2 and 2A Albert Road) and construction of 110 residential units (Use Class C3) within Buildings A, H, J1 and J2 (an increase of 58 residential units across the Victoria Quarter Redevelopment Area), 623sqm of commercial/retail/office floorspace (Use Class A1-A4/B1/D1/D2) within Building A and Building J1, the creation of new publically accessible open spaces and pedestrian routes together with associated access, servicing, car parking, cycle parking and landscaping. Relocation of an existing sub-station."

All the documents relating to both the original 'gateway' planning application and the amendment can be found on the Council's planning website.

LINK: tinyurl.com/victoriaquarter1

Many people found the five summary documents we produced useful to quickly understand the outline of what is proposed. We have updated the diagrams following the amendment.

- Victoria Quarter Site Plan
- Birds Eye View Sketch
- Building Heights
- Elevation Comparison
- Building Line Comparison

These five diagrams should be attached to this newsletter, or can be obtained from our website. That is also where you can find our January newsletter which outlined the original scheme in detail.

LINK: www.newbarnet.org.uk

Making Your Voice Heard

If you, like us, think this development and the amendment should be rejected as it currently stands, please contact the council's planning department and make your views known.

The Save New Barnet Campaign have never been against development – just inappropriate development. While we welcome the previously consented scheme for the redevelopment of the contaminated former gasworks site, we have serious concerns about the height and density of the additional 'gateway' scheme.

In our view, the main grounds for opposition remain:

- Gross overdevelopment.
- Not in keeping with surrounding buildings and character of the area.
- Siting breaches relevant policies.
- Inappropriate design in terms of layout, scale and massing.
- Insufficient car parking numbers.
- Inadequate proposals to address traffic volumes in the area.

I commented on the original proposals, do I need to comment on the amendment too?

Yes.

One Housing have submitted this amendment to in order to address the public comments received. If you don't think that the very small changes proposed go far enough to deal with the issues you have raised, it is important that you say this to the council's planning department.

When this application goes in front of the planning committee, the developer will claim that they have 'listened to residents' and 'addressed their concerns' through the amendment they have submitted. It is therefore vital that local residents respond to the amendment to state that it does not satisfactorily deal with all the issues that have been raised, and that the development as planned should be rejected.

I didn't comment on the original proposals, is it too late now?

No.

As the developer has submitted an amendment, a new public consultation period has opened. You are therefore now able to comment on both the original plan and the amendment. Please take this opportunity if you missed it first time round.

How To Comment On The Planning Application

The quickest way to is to use the form on Barnet Council's planning website

<https://publicaccess.barnet.gov.uk>

Enter the reference **16/7601/FUL** in the bottom box marked "Enter a keyword..."

Or just use this direct link: tinyurl.com/victoriaquarter2

Deadline is **Monday 6 March 2017**.

Alternatively if you want to make more detailed comments (or the website is not working) you can send an email or write a letter. You must quote the reference **16/7601/FUL** and include your full name and address.

email planning.consultation@barnet.gov.uk

post Development Management & Building Control Service
Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, London, N20 0EJ

What Else Can I Do?

- Please make sure that all your friends & neighbours are aware of the planning application and this recent amendment.
- Encourage them to register their objections.
- Give them a copy of this newsletter - print one out, email them the pdf, or just point them in the direction of our website (www.newbarnet.org.uk) where they can sign up to our email list to be kept up to date.
- If you are active on social media, share the information in appropriate groups.

Who Else Can I Contact?

The first and most important action is to register your objection with Barnet's planning department, but you may also want to contact your local elected representatives to let them know your views.

The development site is in East Barnet Ward, but is less than 100m from both Oakleigh Ward & High Barnet Ward. Note that some councillors serve on the planning committee so may not be able to respond.

East Barnet Ward Councillors

Cllr Rebecca Challice cllr.r.challice@barnet.gov.uk
Cllr Philip Cohen cllr.p.cohen@barnet.gov.uk
Cllr Laurie Williams cllr.l.williams@barnet.gov.uk

High Barnet Ward Councillors

Cllr David Longstaff cllr.d.longstaff@barnet.gov.uk
Cllr Bridget Perry cllr.b.perry@barnet.gov.uk
Cllr Wendy Prentice cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk

Oakleigh Ward Councillors

Cllr Sachin Rajput cllr.s.rajput@barnet.gov.uk
Cllr Brian Salinger cllr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk
Cllr Stephen Sowerby cllr.s.sowerby@barnet.gov.uk

Member of Parliament for Chipping Barnet

Theresa Villiers MP
LINK: www.theresavilliers.co.uk

Finally, the Save New Barnet Campaign is always interested to hear your views. Contact details below.

That's all for now.

Regards,

Save New Barnet Campaign Team

Save New Barnet Campaign

website: www.newbarnet.org.uk
facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/18590613740
twitter: www.twitter.com/NewBarnet
email: info@newbarnet.org.uk
post: % The Community Centre, 48/50 Victoria Road, New Barnet, EN4 9PF

Save New Barnet Campaign is a non-political group of local residents fighting for a better New Barnet. The group seeks to inform the local community about potential changes to the area, and oppose inappropriate developments. The group aims to promote a clear vision for how New Barnet could be developed for the benefit of the community based on the views of local people.

The campaign is funded entirely by donations from individuals. It is not bankrolled by any company or commercial organisation.