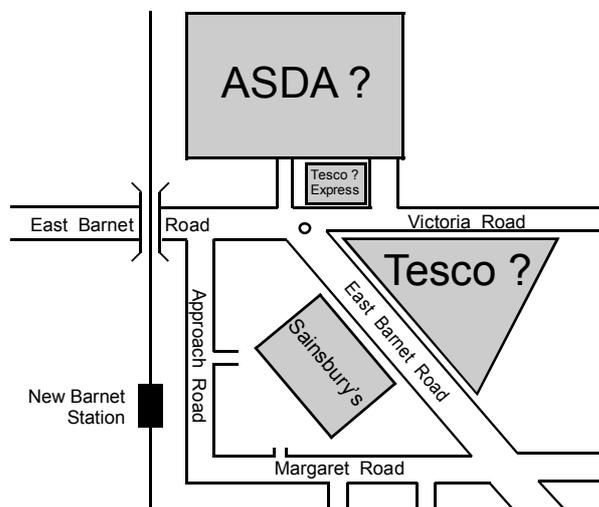


Save New Barnet

Newsletter

28th October 2009



Dear Friends,

Welcome to another update from the Save New Barnet Campaign. Apologies for the long gap since our last newsletter, but there wasn't much to report after ASDA withdrew their planning application. We have been keeping a close eye on developments across the borough to see how Barnet's planning policy is being implemented. The most pressing issue is now the "Local Development Framework". More details of that later in this newsletter, after an update on the current situation of local development proposals.

ASDA & Tesco may have been quiet recently but THEY HAVE NOT GONE AWAY

New planning applications could be submitted at any time. Make sure that you and your friends and neighbours are all on our email list so we can alert you as soon as we hear any news. Sign up via our website or drop us an email (details at the end of this newsletter).

ASDA (Gasworks Site)

The planning application for the gasworks site was withdrawn by ASDA on 30th June, the day before it was due to be decided on by Councillors at the planning committee. ASDA have been silent since then, but are presumably working on a redesign of their scheme.

Thanks yet again to everyone who took the time to write letters to the Barnet's planning department. Your 1828 letters of objection (and 2556 signature petition) shows that local residents DO care about New Barnet. It sent a strong signal to both ASDA and Tesco that we are not going to be walked over.

Tesco (East Barnet Road / Victoria Road / Optex Site)

Nothing has been heard from Tesco for months about their major 'regeneration' scheme. When we last had contact in May they had changed architects and were looking at a 'smaller' development. This would be a 'phased' regeneration, the first part being just a Tesco superstore which, initially at least, seemed to have lost the blocks of flats on top. However their ultimate aim in would still be to demolish everything along East Barnet Road from Victoria Road to the petrol station.

The sad state of 15 East Barnet Road (on the corner of Victoria Road) continues to make the whole area look run down. Is this a deliberate policy by Tesco?

Tesco Express (7-11 Victoria Road)

Planning permission for this development was granted by a planning inspector at an appeal in April. Nothing seems to have happened. The only change to the site is that the advertising hoarding has been removed. The existing buildings continue to fall further into dereliction.

Developments in High Barnet

A Tesco Express opened next door to the Bull Theatre in July. Delivery lorries parking outside the store regularly obstruct traffic at this busy junction. Tesco currently have a planning application to extend the store opening hours.

A Sainsbury's Local opens at the end of October next door to Boots in the High Street.

One side effect of these additional stores in High Barnet, along with the planned Tesco Express in New Barnet, is that they eat up the 'need' for supermarket floorspace in the north of the borough. Hopefully this means it will be harder to justify the 'need' for superstores in New Barnet and give grounds for rejection of future proposals.

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Local Development Framework

Within the next few weeks Barnet Council will start public consultation its Local Development Framework (LDF). This document will replace the existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and sets out the plans for development in the borough for the next 15 years. However construction over that period could change the face of the borough for the next 50 - 100 years. We are also expecting to see a specific New Barnet Development Strategy soon. However as such a document has been promised as being published "next month" for the last two years we are not holding our breath!

The snappily titled "Local Development Framework - Core Strategy - Direction of Travel" document was put before Barnet Council's Cabinet Meeting on 21st October (<http://tinyurl.com/21oct09>).

One particularly worrying item is in section 8.3 - Optimising Housing Density:

"We will also promote the following sustainable locations with good access to public transport as the main focus of enhancement and major infill housing development:"

"- major transport routes including the A5 (Edgware Road - Burnt Oak Broadway), A1000 (Great North Road - High Road), A504 (Hendon Lane - Finchley Lane), A598 (Finchley Road) and A110 (Cat Hill - East Barnet Road)."

In other words a policy of encouraging developers to build blocks of flats to replace family houses, as has already happened in Station Road.

In section 10.6 - Town Centre Frameworks - it states:

"New Barnet offers an opportunity for additional convenience goods floorspace with a mixed use development on the former gas works site."

This contradicts the evidence that was gathered by the Save New Barnet campaign against the ASDA development. If the LDF is approved as it currently stands, it will give the green light in planning terms to unsuitable development schemes in New Barnet. We strongly suspect that both Tesco and ASDA are waiting to see what is in the LDF before submitting new planning applications.

It is therefore essential that local residents express their views on the LDF. As soon as we know more details of the consultation process we will let you know, along with suggested ways of getting your voice heard.

New Barnet - Local Centre, Not Town Centre

One of the problems we have encountered in fighting against big developments locally is that Barnet's planners classify New Barnet as a "District Town Centre", of equal status to High Barnet, North Finchley and Whetstone. Developers claim their major schemes are needed in New Barnet because it is "a town centre".

The definition of a district town centre comes from having a certain amount of retail floor space, a range of shops offering a variety of goods and services, banks, community and leisure facilities.

New Barnet's only qualification to be a district town centre seems to be the amount of floor space, most of which is simply due to the presence of a large Sainsbury's supermarket. There are actually more individual shops in East Barnet Village, offering a wider range of goods, plus a bank and a library. It is however correctly identified as a local centre, providing service to local residents. New Barnet should also be classified this way, which would also give it some protection from the developers.

Interesting fact - There are 163 "town centres" in the whole of Greater London. New Barnet is the 3rd smallest.

Newsletter

This newsletter (and the previous ones) can be downloaded from the website as a printable PDF. Why not print off some copies and distribute them to your neighbours to keep them up to date with the latest news?

www.newbarnet.org.uk/documents/publicity

Thank you for your continued support.

Regards,
Save New Barnet Campaign Team

Save New Barnet Campaign

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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.