

Save New Barnet

Newsletter



6th April 2017

Hello again, friends of the Save New Barnet Campaign.

Victoria Quarter - Second Amendment to Planning Application

Back in February, One Housing, the owners of the gasworks site in Albert Road, submitted an amendment to their planning application for their Gateway addition to the already consented Victoria Quarter scheme. Following the public consultation on both the original (November 2016) and amended (February 2017) plans there were 205 objections registered online by local residents.

One Housing have now submitted a second amendment (March 2017) to their planning application.

The Save New Barnet Campaign has examined this second amendment to the planning application and have decided to take a NEUTRAL stance.

Some of the issues we raised have now been addressed, not enough for us to be fully supportive, but for good reason we are no longer recommending objection. Please read on for an explanation of why we have decided to take this position.

Changes in the Second Amendment

The main changes in this amendment are to building H. In addition there are also minor changes to the road layout within the site and the entrance to building A. Sadly there has been no change to the proposed 8 storey height of building A. It is still two floors higher than the building it replaces in the consented scheme.

The original planning application for the Gateway site contained 115 units. This second amendment brings that figure down to 104 units. Thus there are now a total of 357 units across both the consented and Gateway sites forming the Victoria Quarter development. The reduced number of flats brings the number of parking spaces within the minimum Local Plan requirements.

The 'Design and Access Statement Addendum - March 2017' which can found on the council's planning website details the changes One Housing are proposing.

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. By removing further units from the development, block H has now been reduced to 4 storeys on both the Albert Road and Victoria Road frontages.

The building has been redesigned to accentuate its horizontal features instead of attempting to be a vertical 'landmark'. The previous three 3 bed mews houses along the path to the park has been changed to two 4 bed mews houses which are stated to 'replace the recently completed houses on Victoria Road'.

Position of Building H

We are pleased to see that the entire building H has been pushed back around 5 m from the previous outrageous position on the edge of the narrow pavement. It will now follow the long established Victoria Road building line. This will allow for both a widened pavement and a planted area (plus trees) in front of the block. This should help to reduce the impact of this building on the street scene.

We are glad that One Housing have taken heed of the very strong objections to the original position of this building which would have set an appalling precedent for any future developments nearby.

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 104 residential units (Use Class C3) within Buildings A, H, J1 and J2 (an increase of 52 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 both of the amendments can be found on the Council's planning website.

LINK: tinyurl.com/victoriaquarter1

Due to this second amendment, public comments for this planning application have now been re-opened until Wednesday 19th April.

Our January and February newsletters with details of the proposals can still be found on our website.

LINK: www.newbarnet.org.uk

Developments in London

The climate for development in the London area has changed dramatically in just the last year. The emphasis is now very much on quantity over quality, with huge pressure to build much higher and more densely. Refusals of large developments by councils, following objections by residents, are alarmingly being overturned by the Planning Inspectorate, Greater London Authority and Mayor in order to increase the delivery of new housing units.

If the main gasworks site, which received planning permission in January 2015, were to go to the planners today, we would be likely to see a very different development. Instead of the townhouses and 5 storey blocks of flats overlooking the park, there would be strong pressure for multiple 8-10 storey tower blocks.

Just down the road at the North London Business Park (currently home to Barnet Council offices), plans have recently been unveiled for redevelopment of the site for 1350 homes in mainly 8 and 9 storey blocks.

In an ideal world we would love to see 2/3 storey houses fronting Victoria Road, but sadly this is not going to happen. Thanks to the pressure of your objections, One Housing have made some improvements to make their Gateway scheme a little more acceptable.

It is therefore the view of the Save New Barnet Campaign team that we would prefer to see the full Victoria Quarter scheme built as planned, despite some reservations. Further delay could cause us to have a development imposed on us that could be far worse. We understand that some of you may be disappointed with this stance, but a development WILL happen on this site and sometimes you just have to be pragmatic.

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.