



6th January 2023

Hello again, and happy new year from the Save New Barnet Campaign.

It was in January 2008 that Tesco announced out of the blue their redevelopment plan for New Barnet - to replace all the buildings opposite Sainsburys with a superstore and 200+ flats above. This was a 'supermarket wars' challenge to ASDA, who finally revealed their own plans for the neighbouring gasworks site a few months later - another superstore with 200+ flats above. Tesco eventually withdrew and housing was built on the three small sites they owned. Fifteen years on and the gasworks site saga continues.

Victoria Quarter - New Planning Applications

As reported in our last newsletter new planning applications have recently been registered by Fairview for parts of the gasworks site fronting onto Victoria Road. These are revisions to parts of the consented plans for 371 homes that they have so far failed to build, plus a temporary car park for residents of blocks H & J.

- Block H Planning Amendments - 22/5754/S73
- Block J Planning Amendments - 22/5755/S73
- Temporary Car Park Planning Application - 22/5928/FUL

There are two applications for amendments due to the full consented scheme having been agreed via three separate planning applications between 2014 and 2017. **The deadline for public comments for the amendments is Friday 13 January 2023.**

The Save New Barnet team have been carefully going through the applications, and the comments we will be submitting to Barnet's planners are at the end of this newsletter. Our response highlights our deep concerns and identifies a number of anomalies in the plans.

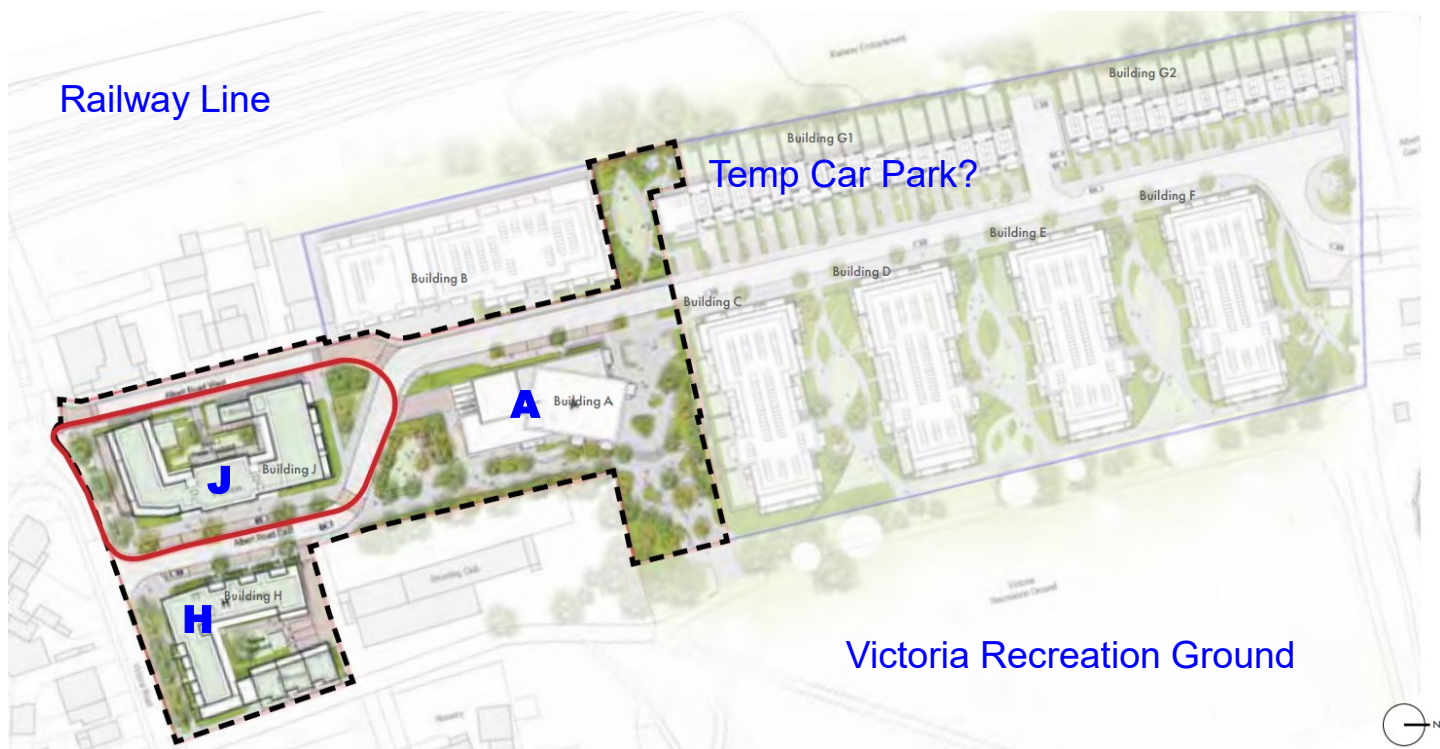
If you also wish to make a comment on blocks H & J fronting Victoria Road we suggest you submit duplicate responses as the two planning applications are so closely interlinked.

Note that these are amendments to previously approved plans for buildings H & J. The position and heights have not fundamentally changed, but the internal layouts, unit mix, and architectural detailing have been altered.

All three planning applications can be examined via Barnet Council's planning website.

LINK: www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control

Select 'View or comment on a planning application' then 'Basic Search' and enter the reference number in the box at the bottom.



Victoria Quarter - Judicial Review

Fairview have been granted a 30 minute oral hearing at the High Court on Wednesday 18 January 2023 to plead their case that their application for a Judicial Review should not have been dismissed. This is an attempt to overturn the decision of the Planning Inspector who refused their 2021 plans for 539 flats on the gasworks site. We will let you know the outcome as soon as we have it.

Regards,
Save New Barnet Campaign Team



Save New Barnet

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.

SNB Response

We have deep concerns and find it most strange that the developer has had 5 years to start the construction of Blocks H and J, yet the application is due to be determined 5 days before the renewal hearing of their appeal against the judicial review decision to uphold the refusal by the Planning Inspectorate of their 2021 application. We cannot understand why the developers would not await the outcome of that renewal hearing and then bring forward a revised proposal for the entire gasworks site. However, if they insist in pressing forward then we feel most strongly that there should be in place relevant conditions to ensure that what they have proposed or have permission for, is actually built.

While the modifications for block H & J, on their own, appear acceptable, the concern is that they are not linked to the overall site development and, at this stage, there is no guarantee that the rest of the 2017 application will be built. Indeed, the developer has repeatedly stated that **“they will NOT build the 2017 scheme.”**

The Design and Access Statement (DAS) set out the proposed improvements of the revised application on page 18. However, some of these so called ‘improvements’ do not appear to be deliverable or are non-existent, as follows:

“Widened Albert Road West with pedestrian paths to either side” - road appears to be the same width on the consented and proposed scheme with no evidence of widening.

“Widened Albert Road East to maintain servicing of the gasworks to the north of the site” - road appears to be the same width on the consented and proposed scheme with no evidence of widening.

“Realignment of Albert Road East to improve visibility splays and minimise congestion at the access to the underground parking of building A” – given that the Fairview have stated that they will not be building Block A at this time, that their construction management plan shows a different Block A design and layout with no access to the underground car parking, then this seems entirely spurious and misleading. Indeed, the construction management plan appears to show the real reason for the realignment of the road is to allow the construction of Block A from the refused scheme.

“Realigned Albert Road East to increase and improve south facing amenity setting” (of Block A) – the scheme removes amenity space immediately adjacent to Block J and moves it to in front of Block A yet there is no commitment to build block A at this time, so how can we have confidence that this landscaping will take place and there will be no net loss of amenity space? There is also a very real concern that the width of the access route through to the park will be reduced, an issue which the GLA criticised in the refused 2021 scheme.

“More 3 bed family units” – while this is true (plus 7 units), there is a greater loss of 2 and 4 bed units (minus 13 units) with an overall net increase in the number of one bedroom units (plus 6 units), failing to deliver the family housing needed.

“Adjustment of the duplex provisions” – in the consented scheme there were two mews houses in Block J with roof terrace gardens and in Block H, there were 3 maisonettes and three mews houses, the latter 3 bed 5P units with roof terraces. There are now only 3 duplexes (2B, 4P) with standard balconies in Block H and the mews houses in both blocks have been removed.

There are also a number of anomalies within this application as follows:

- The temporary car park allocates 104 spaces to accommodate the parking requirements of Blocks H, J and A, yet the developer is clear that there is no plan to build Block A at this stage. The temporary car park is also remote for the properties it is serving when it could have been located adjacent to Blocks H & J on the site of Block B from the consented scheme.

- The two Blocks, H and J, have no social housing (just shared ownership), and no 4 bed properties. While that might be acceptable when taken as part of the wider 371 homes consented scheme, the risk is that the rest of the development may also be amended, block by block, and in so doing fail to meet the specific planning conditions of parking, housing mix and social housing of the consented scheme.
- The energy system to supply heating and hot water to Blocks H and J is gas powered, but the energy report appended to the application at section 9, page 22 makes reference to the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) system included in the refused scheme and is supported by the roof layout plan of Block G from the refused scheme. In the 2017 scheme, the energy centre was located in South East corner of the basement car park. As such, it remains a serious concern that this amended application is simply a way of reapplying for the 2021 refused scheme by stealth, one modified application at a time.

Rather than oppose the proposed amendments to Blocks H and J and to ensure construction starts, we would ask that officers impose a series of conditions on the developer to ensure that the principles of 2017 scheme are retained. These include the following:

- The proportion of 4 bed and social ownership homes are maintained or enhanced when amended proposals for the rest of the site are brought forward;
- Proposals to enhance the landscaping to the south of Block A must be delivered and cannot be subsequently reduced when a revised application for Block A is submitted;
- That the proposed landscaping changes in front of Block A do not reduce the width of the access route through to the park;
- That the temporary car park of 108 spaces cannot be removed until the underground car park is completed at the quantum specified in the 2017 consented scheme;
- That access to the underground car park is retained under Block A in any subsequent application amendments;
- That the maisonettes and mews houses removed from this amendment are reinstated elsewhere on the site when amended proposals for the rest of the site are brought forward;
- That the applicant clarifies by how much they are widening Albert Road East and West; and
- That the applicant clarifies where the energy centre will be located.