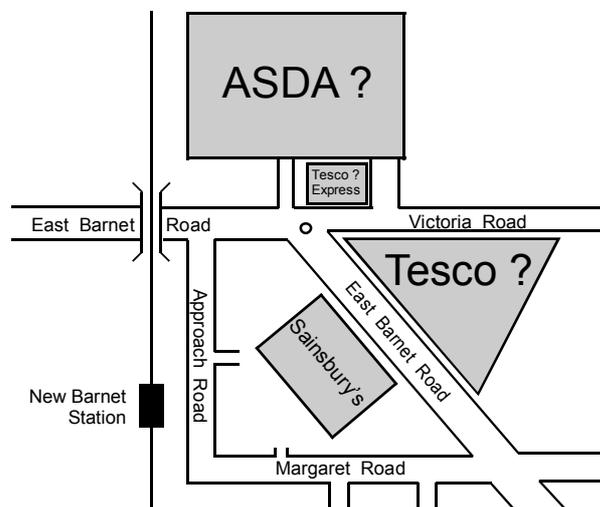


Save New Barnet

Newsletter

7th October 2014



Friends, welcome to another Save New Barnet Campaign newsletter.

Albert Road Gasworks Site (ASDA) (B/04834/14)

A planning application has been submitted to Barnet Council by consultants working for ASDA, the owners of the gasworks site. Public consultation is now open until 23rd October 2014.

Full details are on the Barnet's planning website:
tinyurl.com/gasworks2014

You will recall that ASDA replaced their original design team and brought in consultants who were used to working with the community. They engaged with New Barnet Community Association (NBCA) and the SNB team from the very beginning. They undertook thirteen different feasibility studies but each time came back to our SNB master plan as the best layout for the new development. We must again say thank you to the two local architects who put in many hours of their own time and professional expertise to design a master plan addressing the wishes of the New Barnet community. It is based on the 'Vision for New Barnet' drawn up following our first public meeting back in 2008, open days at the Community Centre and online surveys and consultation.

There will be no supermarket or small convenience store on the new development. There will be 306 homes (a mixture of houses, maisonettes and flats), a shop on the East Barnet Road frontage and space for commercial or community use, underground car park, improved access to the recreation ground. The buildings will vary from three storeys high with mainly four storey houses and five storey flats and one block of six storeys. Originally the planners suggested 13 storeys on the site and more recently there has been pressure to make the blocks mainly eight or nine storeys high. This we have strenuously resisted with political support and to their credit ASDA have fought the battle with us. They have made other modifications to their plans to reflect comments from the community.

NBCA/SNB feel that the proposals for the residential/other buildings elements of the site are the best that we are likely to get to meet the overall community aspirations. There is however a major omission in the proposals and that is the lack of community benefit.

The developer is required to pay a sum in the region of £3,500,000 towards the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This development is going to have a major impact on the New Barnet community and we feel strongly that this money should be reinvested here in New Barnet.

The Vision for New Barnet had a number of items high on the priority list and these were reflected in the responses from the public to the two exhibitions that ASDA held and their online survey. In order of priority from the consultation:

1. Community swimming pool
2. Community centre / hall
3. Improvements to the recreation ground
4. Housing designated for the over 55s
5. Nursery

continues overleaf...

1. Swimming pool

We have been aware for a number of years that there has been no investment in the Church Farm swimming pool which needs major improvements and the site has been considered for housing and other uses. Earlier this year the council considered a Sport and Physical Activities Outline Business Plan and this considered closing the 18 metre swimming pool at Church Farm and “Redevelop on a new site to provide a pool and sports hall”. It also said “that consideration is being given to disposing of the site for residential development and developing a new facility at the nearby Gas Works site off Victoria Road in New Barnet.”

Now is the opportunity to provide a good quality pool and sports and recreation facility on an existing underused open space and for most of it to be paid for by the various development sites in the area.

Sport England has carried out a research project into Affordable Community Swimming Pools and produced a no frills basic model that can be self-funding once a suitable building is provided. The ideal premises has a 25m six lane pool plus a smaller training pool thus allowing two activities to run at the same time.

2. Community centre / hall

It is unlikely that a new building on the site would be sustainable or self-funding and there are no public funds available to meet running costs. It is suggested that some reordering and a small extension be provided at the existing New Barnet Community Centre in Victoria Road.

3. Improvements to the recreation ground

No improvements will be successful unless there is access to clean safe toilets. Standalone toilets are invariably vandalised and abused. This can be addressed by making them part of, or attached to, another active facility, such as a swimming pool.

There is also demand for a café or similar catering facility to attract families. This is best provided as part of the swimming pool as it adds to both the pool and the Rec.

The play area needs improvement and a range of equipment provided for a broader age group.

The installation of adult equipment such as a keep fit trail and apparatus similar to that installed in Oak Hill Park would bring a new client group to the Rec.

Initially we considered siting these attractions near to the new development but after discussions with members of the community we suggest that the area adjoining the existing bowling club and tennis courts would be better as there are existing services, parking and buildings and the loss of green space would be minimised. We also suggest that the access to the Rec from Victoria Road where the former Barnet Athletics Club and the Nightingale Nursery are based could be used as a small car park for the Rec. This would be similar to the Oak Hill park arrangements, which work successfully.

4. Housing designed for the over 55s

As people live longer there is an increasing need for properties to downsize into a good quality smaller home and free up money to enable a reasonable quality life style. This is working well in some provincial areas where the price of new dwellings is not as high as in London. While it may catch on in the suburbs the potential is not yet certain, so is not appealing to developers.

5. Nursery.

There is demand for nurseries in London, especially those near to transport to central London. We have supported the Nightingale Nursery whose lease is expiring in their present premises in Victoria Road. They have provided a good quality service to the community and would be desirable if they could relocate to new premises on the site.

Other issues

The following items were not listed on the questionnaires but are significant issues for the community:

Schools - As there will be a significant number of families moving into the area there will be more pressure put on to both primary and secondary schools.

Traffic and Roads - The developer is addressing some of the issues at the Station Road / Lytton Road and East Barnet Road / Victoria Road junctions. However we believe that measures will also be required at other junctions, namely:

- Station Road / Plantagenet Road
- East Barnet Road / Brookhill Road
- Traffic light junction Brookhill Road / Park Road / Cat Hill
- East Barnet Road / Longmore Avenue

Summary

The £3.5m CIL money must be used to pay for the items listed above to mitigate the impact of this new development on the local community.

If you have any comments on the planning application as submitted, and especially on the lack of any community benefits, please write to the Council's Planning Department as soon as possible.

Comments can be lodged online via the relevant page - tinyurl.com/gasworks2014

Alternatively contact the case officer, Jason Traves.

Email: planning.enquiry@barnet.gov.uk

Phone: 020 8359 3000

Post: Planning Reception (2nd floor), Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, N20 0EJ

We would suggest also sending a copy of your comments to your local councillors, and the Save New Barnet Campaign (contact details at end of newsletter).

East Barnet Ward Councillors:

Cllr Rebecca Challice - cldr.r.challice@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Philip Cohen - cldr.p.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Laurie Williams - cldr.l.williams@barnet.gov.uk

High Barnet Ward Councillors:

Cllr David Longstaff - cldr.d.longstaff@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Bridget Perry - cldr.b.perry@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Wendy Prentice - cldr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk

Oakleigh Ward Councillors:

Cllr Sachin Rajput - cldr.s.rajput@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Brian Salinger - cldr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Stephen Sowerby - cldr.s.sowerby@barnet.gov.uk

The closing date for comments to the Planning Department is 23rd October 2014. Quote reference number B/04834/14 in all correspondence.

Former Alexandra Public House, 133 East Barnet Road (B/02905/14)

In our last SNB Newsletter we were highly critical of certain aspects of the planning application for 15 flats that had been submitted for this site. We are pleased to report that the developer listened to our views and has submitted a revised application that addresses most of our concerns. The ugly protruding balcony 'feature' on the corner has been removed, and the dormer windows in the roof made more even in size. The two metre high wall along the Victoria Road elevation is required as an acoustic barrier to the flats. We think there are ways in which the impact can be softened and discussions will continue.

The revised application is on the council's website:

tinyurl.com/133ebrammended

Confusingly both the original and amended plans are all listed together. When looking at the 'related documents' section, click on the date column to sort the documents into date order so that you can find the most recent plans.

The closing date for comments to the council's planning departments is the 14th October 2014. Quote reference number B/02905/14 in all correspondence.

Spen Hill (Tesco) Development

Work is in progress on all three sites. It is now possible to see the footprint and location of the houses fronting the large main site in Victoria Road and the corner building at the East Barnet Road junction. All work is due to be completed by October 2015. If you have any issues to raise with the contractors (Durkan), contact the site manager Matt Jackson on 07834 748 282 or matt.jackson@durkan.co.uk

The developers have launched a website (mainly for marketing purposes) which shows computer generated images of the varied housing being constructed: www.newestbarnet.com

New Barnet Community Centre

We are pleased to announce that the Community Centre in Victoria Road has been registered by the Council as an ACV (Asset of Community Value). This means that if any development is proposed on the site, we have to be given an opportunity to bid for the building and are given six months to find the money. The designation also has to be taken into account when any planning application for the site is considered.

SNB Newsletters

Please pass on this newsletter to any friends, colleagues or neighbours who may be interested. If you received this newsletter 'second hand' you can sign up for your own email copy from our website: www.newbarnet.org.uk

All our previous SNB campaign newsletters can be found here:
www.newbarnet.org.uk/documents/publicity

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.