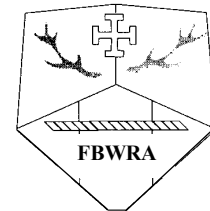


newsletter

Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association



In this issue

1 - 3 North Finchley plan

4 North Finchley development map

5 Friary Park Summer Show

6 Goodbye to Chix Chox & The Press 6 Apology—Friary Park News— Trees— FBWRA web site—FBWRA at Town Hall

COUNCIL HAS PLANS FOR NORTH FINCHLEY- PART II

Tall buildings, intensification, fewer shops, less parking –the end of North Finchley as we know it



In this article we summarise and comment on some of the key elements of Barnet's proposals for fundamental changes to North Finchley town centre, on which the Council is now consulting: the "North Finchley Town Centre Framework Draft Supplementary Planning Document" (or "SPD"). The closing date for the Council to receive comments is 27 November 2017 and full details of how to submit comments, together with the draft SPD and supporting documents can be found through the Council's webpage

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

The Council is aiming to adopt the final version of the SPD in February 2018, when it will become one of several formal planning policies that apply to the North Finchley town centre area. This is important, because it is much harder for residents to successfully object to an application which complies with the relevant planning policies, such as the SPD.

Special members' meeting to discuss North Finchley Planning Proposals

Because of the importance of the Council's planning proposals for North Finchley town centre we are holding a special members' meeting, open to all members of FBWRA to discuss the plans. The meeting is being organised jointly with the Finchley Society. The meeting is to be held at

Trinity Church Hall, 15 Nether Street, North Finchley, N12 7NN on Thursday 23 November, at 7.30 p.m. (near Arts Depot)

Council officers will give a presentation on the proposals, after which members of FBWRA and the Finchley Society who have studied the proposals in depth will give some comments and then there will be an opportunity for a question and answer session.

In effect, the Council will use the SPD to set a policy regime that favours the sort of developments that the Council itself wishes to encourage. If one wishes to comment on the policies themselves it is important to do so no later than the 27 November closing date.

The SPD area focuses on Ballards Lane and the High Road in North Finchley and runs from Waitrose and Homebase in the south to just near Kwik-Fit on the corner of Woodside Lane in the north; as well as properties fronting the High Road and Ballards Lane it includes various Council car parks.

A key proposal in the SPD is a plan to re-configure the North Finchley road network, with Ballards Lane north-bound through-traffic re-routed to Kingsway and then to the High Road, which would be converted to 2-way operation (where now south-bound only, between the Tally-Ho pub and the Arts Depot). This would enable the Ballards Lane section of road to be made more pedestrian friendly, while restricting vehicles using it to buses and local traffic.

The bus station would be closed. Buses would be moved to stands on the street (it is not suggested where). The SPD states that in comparison to Whetstone, East Finchley and Finchley Church End, North Finchley appears to be "offering considerably greater road space to traffic" so that road space could be "reallocated" from use by traffic to footway widening, narrower road crossings, street planting, bus waiting and cycle lanes.

Continued on page 2

Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents' Association

- We are non-political
- We work for all residents in the area
- We discuss issues with Local Councillors and Council Officials
- Associated with the following bodies
- The Federation of Residents' Associations of Barnet
- The Finchley Society
- Friends of Friary Park
- Open Spaces Society
- The Friern Barnet & District Local History Society
- Coppetts Wood Conservationists
- The London Green Belt Council
- Love Whetstone

Unfortunately, no traffic study has been carried out. The plans to effectively close part of Ballards Lane and convert the High Road to 2-way operation may be unworkable. Also, there is a lack of detail on proposed locations for bus stands, cycle lanes and the like. Whilst the draft SPD is strong on "vision" (the term occurs frequently in the document) it lacks detail on the highway proposals and how their delivery would be guaranteed.

To be fair to the SPD's authors, the document recognises that a detailed technical study of traffic flows, junction operation and the like will be required, but surely such a study should be carried out before the SPD becomes planning policy, and not afterwards? What if the study shows the proposals would cause traffic chaos and are unworkable—where does that leave the other SPD policies?

The SPD identifies six "Key Opportunity Sites" (*see plan*) with "potential for comprehensive mixed use development which will drive the town centre's regeneration".

1. The Tally-Ho Triangle and Arts Depot



It is not clear what will happen to the shops and restaurants on the right hand side of this picture—they are in the development area but they are not "key opportunity sites"

The vision for this site is that the buildings between the Arts Depot and the Tally-Ho pub would be demolished (including the recently renovated Grand Arcade) and replaced with an area of cafes, restaurants and shops at ground level, with residential above, rising to up to 12 storeys near the 16 storey Arts Depot building, gradually sloping down to 3 storeys by the Tally-Ho. A new courtyard space should be provided by the entrance to the Arts Depot. This space might become a new site for the North Finchley Market (currently in the Lodge Lane Car Park). The bus station would close and could be used for retail, community or leisure uses.

2. Ballards Lane/Nether Street

This site contains the Finchley United Services Club (behind the war memorial) and various office buildings (some now converted to residential use and generally seen as of poor quality) and runs up to the junction of Nether Street and Ballards Lane.



Will the proposal for a 12 story development enhance the Tally Ho wind tunnel from gale force to hurricane force?

A comprehensive redevelopment is proposed with "a landmark building of up to 12 storeys" adjacent to the war memorial, falling to 4 storeys towards the Ballards Lane shopping parade. The building would provide offices on the lower floors and potentially shops and leisure uses. Upper floors could include flats. The building line would be brought forward (so Ballards Lane could become something of a narrow canyon at this point).

3. Finchley House



It is understood that Finchley House has been sold with the intention of converting the offices to flats

Lying on the corner of the High Road and Kingsway, this site is currently an elderly 9 storey office block and 6 terraced houses with converted ground floor uses. It is a prominent site and its redevelopment could take the form of a building of "approximately" 12 storeys height, with employment uses on ground and first floors and flats above.

Incognito Theatre, Holly Park Road The Odd Couple - Female version 19th November - 25th November 2017
Written by Neil Simon, directed by Ruth Nixon
Performances are Sunday at 6pm, Monday - Friday at 8pm, Saturday at 3pm and 8pm.

FRIERN BARNET & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
start 7:30 p.m. November 22nd Behind Closed Doors: The Life of a Prison Officer (by Pauline Martindale)
North Middlesex Golf Club, Friern Barnet Lane, N20 0NL

4. "East Wing"



They want to close the bus station and park even more buses on the local streets where there are plenty of parked buses.

This site lies opposite the Arts Depot "triangle", running from Argos in the north down to the junction of Woodhouse Road and the High Road (the "Sea Rock" restaurant). The objective is that this site, together with the Arts-Depot and / Tally Ho Triangle, should become part of a "strong retail, leisure and cultural anchor to the town centre". The SPD envisages that the Argos building would be retained and the upper floors used as flats and that the rest of the site would be redeveloped as shops, cafes and restaurants at ground floor and flats above. The residential frontages of the south of the site should be retained (they are seen as contributing positively to local character).

5. Friern Park/ High Road



What will happen to the residents when their homes are knocked down?

This lies between Friern Park and Stanhope Road on the east of the High Road and contains the "Bohemia", Santander, McDonalds, Tesco, WH Smith and other, smaller shops. The SPD states that the Bohemia and Santander buildings should be retained (as they contribute to local character) and that the rest of the site should be redeveloped to include shops and restaurants with flats above in 4-6 storey buildings (the current buildings are 3 storey) .

6. Lodge Lane

This site is Lodge Lane Car Park and YVA House fronting it. In the SPD we are told that "redevelopment should seek to improve the sense of arrival to the town centre" and that "redevelopment

should encourage a more efficient use of land whilst continuing to provide an important town centre parking function". Redevelopment should continue to provide retail and similar uses at ground floor with residential and "other suitable town centre uses" above in buildings of up to "approximately" 6 storeys in height". Existing car parking levels should be maintained as a minimum (but the SPD does not state the parking would continue to be for public use) and a 2-level decked car park should be considered.



This will almost certainly be one of the first sites to be redeveloped but where will we park when it is being redeveloped? Unlike what is stated in the report this is a busy car park (but not at 8 a.m. or 6 p.m.).

* * *

In addition to the proposals for the "Key Opportunity Sites", the SPD has a number of smaller scale plans. Thus, retail frontages and shopping parades which are not redeveloped should be enhanced by merging adjacent units to create larger units better suited to modern needs and flats above shops should be improved, including creating access from the high street rather than through service yards at the rear. The SPD strategy for the high street itself, the "public realm", envisages narrowing the carriageway width in the High Road, widening the pavements and incorporating planting where possible, lining the street with trees, and creating "resting and dwelling places", particularly near Lodge Lane.

Whilst large numbers of new flats are proposed (although the SPD is silent as to how many), and with new flats will come more people, the SPD makes no specific provision for additional "social infrastructure", such as a new health centre. We have been told that this omission is because the provision of health centres is a matter for the NHS, not Barnet Council- however, that should not prevent the Council allocating a suitable site for such a use.

This, then, is Barnet Council's "vision" for North Finchley Town Centre- a future of "tree-lined boulevards", more flats (one source we spoke to suggested that 2,000 new flats could be provided if the plans were fully implemented), modern and larger, but fewer shops, a new public courtyard space and a re-configured road network. In many ways it has much to commend it, but the SPD is weak on how the vision will be delivered. The reconfiguration of the road network is unsupported by a traffic study, and so may be impracticable, the SPD calls for a "co-ordinated and comprehensive approach", but (deliberately) has no phasing strategy and any "masterplan" is to be driven by developers, not by our Council.

Please make use of the consultation process to make your views known to the Council.

DT

Map indicating development sites in North Finchley

Key Opportunity Sites - Planning Briefs

Key Opportunity Sites:

- KOS 1: Tally Ho Triangle & Arts Depot
- KOS 2: Ballards Lane/Nether St
- KOS 3: Finchley House
- KOS 4: East Wing
- KOS 5: Friern Park/High Rd
- KOS 6: Lodge Lane

KEY

- Retained Buildings
- Approved Conversion
- Reconfigured Ground Floor
- Possible Retained Building
- Key Opportunity Site
- SPD Area Boundary
- Town Centre Boundary (Local Plan)



Figure 8: Key Opportunity Sites

Friary Park Summer Show

Ever since I first visited the Friern Barnet Summer Show in Friary Park c. 1979, I had thoroughly enjoyed it and been struck by its happy village nature. In time, I became one of the people who helped to put the show together and was very happy to so do. Sadly, a few years ago, when Rev. Adrian Benjamin who was the chairman of the Show Committee retired and moved away, the show ceased to be.

I determined to try and put a show together again and through this newsletter, asked for people to volunteer to help with the project. 5 of us met together last year and formed a new company which we named the Friary Park Summer Show. A few more people then joined us and we began planning. We were all extremely enthusiastic.



However, it soon became obvious that it was not feasible to try and recreate what had happened in the past. We did not have enough volunteers and all of us except one were in receipt of the state pension. In my case, I freely admit to not having the same energy I had even 10 years ago. I cannot answer for the others but I suspect this is also the case. Matters came to a head when my husband became the Mayor of Barnet in May this year. My spare time evaporated and very reluctantly, I had to admit that I just did not have the time or the energy to see the project through.

The wonderful people who had been planning with me felt the same way. In addition to this, we had not been able to encourage any younger people to engage with the project and we all felt that without any obvious continuity of the planning, it was not going to lead anywhere. The company was dissolved.

I will always regret the fact that this project was one mountain too high for me to climb but I will always be grateful to the people who put themselves forward to try and get the show on the road. They know who they are and if I could, I would award each one of them with a Gold Star

KS

Its goodbye from them



After many years, 30 at least, Chix Chox has closed its doors. The proprietors, in good health it is understood, have decided to retire. It is not known if the place will continue as a restaurant, possibly keeping the name, or whether a different kind of shop will open on the premises.

and it's goodbye from them



After serving the local community for many years "The Press" has ceased publication. The weekly published many letters for the Association over the years. In recent times, like the other local papers in the country, thanks to the Internet, it struggled with falling advertising revenue.

HG

News from Friary Park

The Friends Group keeps a constant eye on the Park and we are quick to address issues which are felt important to maintain it in good order. We hold monthly Committee meetings, attended by a representative from Barnet Council Green Spaces dept. and the local Police.

In previous editions we have talked about the poor state of the toilets which causes the most complaints from Park users. One of our tenacious members keeps a close eye and is quick to jump on the Council when the condition falls below an acceptable standard. Our persistence has started to pay off and, in general, the toilets are being maintained better. It is a shame that a minority of users fail to use the facilities properly causing real problems particularly for parents with children.

There is still a small issue with the playground.

The orange circular swing with suspended seats is currently armless and we await its speedy repair.

We are looking at the possibility of planting more trees along the Friern Barnet Lane border in addition to the Friends' own young oak tree which seems to be flourishing. Park users will be aware of the healthy growth of trees between Torrington Park and the brook, partly as a result of planting whips a few years ago. We are still aware of the need to keep plenty of open spaces rather than fill the Park with shrubs and trees.

We have also focussed our attention on the tennis courts which need some TLC, as the basketball area is incomplete and the net posts need to be straightened. We are quick to report cases of graffiti which the Council tend to address promptly.

We are due for a community 'litter pick' although this will now wait until the autumn leaves have been cleared.

RT

Apology to Bernard Mayes

Back in May, when I reported on our AGM, I happily informed you that the association had a new auditor named Bruce Rogers. I have to inform you that this was not correct. The gentleman who so generously offered his services at that meeting is named Bernard Mayes, whose name always has been and always will be Bernard Mayes.

Please accept my apology, Bernard. I promise not to make the same mistake again.

We welcome Bernard Mayes as FBWRA auditor.

KS

Treasuring our trees

Pleasant surprise – we were quite a crowd (40?) gathered for Sandra Lea's informative

and entertaining guided walk in September around the many rare and special trees in Friary Park. What's more, it didn't rain, we didn't straggle, and after two and a half hours

we were still unwilling to disperse and were warm in our thanks. (Look for yourself in the photo on the Friends of Friary Park website.) Next stop Bethune Park?

YR

FBWRA website and a new e-mail address

We are pleased to report that we now have some help for our website. Local resident Jason Faulkner has kindly agreed to assist us with this. Our thanks to Jason for taking this on and also to Lorraine Patel who has provided us with website support for some years, and who has now handed over to Jason. For the moment the website has been closed

for "reconstruction". When it re-opens it will be in a new format and, we hope, will be easier to use.

Closure of the website means that the message forwarding feature that was included on it has also closed, so we have opened a new email account-

fbwra@btinternet.com

This can be used to send emails to FBWRA (but please note that the account will not be monitored continually, although it will be checked on a regular basis).

DT

Summer Splash

27 August 2017 – members' holiday get-together – drinks and cakes and things – on the green by FB Community Library – in bright sunshine and the welcome shade of the tree –

and talk, talk, talk!

Why? Well, it just seemed a good idea! We get talked and written at enough by "them" but seldom have the chance to pool our own thoughts on local matters – and this was the perfect occasion.

A good number rolled up and all lingered. We sported tags showing our street as well as name, and it was a great way to get to know each other better. Much enjoyed. Same time next year?

YR

FBWRA at the Town Hall

FBWRA Treasurer, David Thompson, and Committee member Maria Jordan (who is also Chairman of "Love Whetstone") both addressed the Council's Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting at Hendon Town Hall on 10 October, when it considered and approved the draft North Finchley Town Centre SPD for public consultation (*see main article*).

David voiced concerns arising from the lack of

a traffic study to support the plans in the SPD and also criticised the Council's proposed consultation arrangements, arguing that they would leave many local people unaware of the plans and deprive them of the ability to comment on them. He asked that the Council should arrange for a leaflet publicising the consultation to be delivered to all households in N12.

We are pleased to report that the Councillors did listen- the following day David received an email confirming that the consultation would be expanded to include a leaflet delivery.

Maria spoke of how building more flats in North Finchley without ensuring that additional medical and other "social infrastructure" was actually provided was unacceptable, as it resulted in already stretched facilities for existing residents being put under even more pressure, and argued that it was unsatisfactory for the Council just to avoid the issue by taking the line that such matters were the responsibility of the NHS. We expect to make further representations on this particular issue.

DT