

## FEDERATION OF RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS IN BARNET

### MEETING BY ZOOM 23 NOVEMBER 021

PRESENT : Gordon Massey (BRA) (Chairman), Karen Miller (NBCA), Mary Hogden (FS), Peter Pickering (FS), Robin Bishop (BS), Sheila Shannon (FS), Salim Sabri (WFRA) Pete Storey (FVRA), Jessica Howey (RTRA), Barry Henderson (BRA), Paul Flashman (TRA), Yvonne Ruge (FBWRA), David Thompson (FBWRA), Daniella Boyce (LLRA) Tim Stevenson (LLRA) Tony Zeilinger (HG, SRA) Rob White (EBRA),

APOLOGIES: Frank Orman (MHRA) John Dix (NBCA)

Thanks To Karen Miller for making her Zoom account available for the meeting.

### AGENDA

1. Local Plan The draft circulated in June on which FORAB and RAs commented has been sent to the SoS without alteration along with all the comments submitted. The Inspector will decide which comments will be discussed at the Examination in Public, expected to be held in the Spring.
2. Additional floors on houses and flats This permitted development initiative was introduced following the Policy Exchange proposal that this would be a means to increase housing provision. It excludes properties built before 1948. Many councils had resisted these schemes including Barnet where three appeals have been dismissed. RAs are encouraged to oppose any proposals in their area as there is a high likelihood of them not securing approval. There has been concern over disruption to existing residents of flats during construction and flats losing value. A matter also needing consideration is fire safety and cladding.
3. Converting shops to residential This is another permitted development initiative recently introduced which has been widely criticised because it may lead to an undesirable haphazard mix of shops and residential in town centres to the detriment of footfall. Finchley Society has successfully opposed one application.
4. Update on major schemes
  - (a) B&Q Cricklewood Approved by Strategic Planning Committee on casting vote of Chairman. To the dismay of the RA a ward councillor spoke at the meeting urging approval on the grounds that if refused the Major might approve also demanding even more properties. Now submitted to the Mayor to decide if he wishes to review.
  - (b) North London Business Park Further planning application to double the size of the approved scheme.
  - (c) Victoria Quarter Revised planning app by Fairview opposed by NBCA. Deadline for comments 16/12 Fairview has attacked alternative scheme offered by NBCA that would have substantially increased the number of units over the existing approved scheme but fewer than the Fairview application.
  - (d) Homebase North Finchley Scheme for 307 homes recommended for approval by officers was refused by the Strategic Planning Committee. Finchley Society contributed to appeal hearing as participants and the appeal was dismissed.. Argument was to demonstrate harm. Height featured but dismissal majored on the quality of the homes – too close, poor light, poor

ventilation. RAs are recommended to look closely at the quality of homes in applications for dense flatted developments.

(e) Colney Hatch Lane Two residential blocks – 204 units plus supermarket on former showroom site. Strategic Planning Committee approved. Upheld by the Mayor. RA accepted principle of building on the site but concerned about scale and impact on traffic.

(f) Finchley Central and High Barnet stations TfL partners Taylor Wimpey have withdrawn from both schemes. TfL expected to look for another development partner.

(g) 70 High St, High Barnet It was also noted that following a construction that did not conform to the approved plans the Council Enforcement unit had ordered demolition, which was upheld on appeal. The Inspector directed that demolition and starting construction on a building that conforms to approved plans should be done within 12 months.

5. North Finchley Partnership Board First meeting 22 November. Consists of 27 members of whom 18 turned up. This is a major initiative designed to radically restructure North Finchley town centre and may offer a model for regenerating other town centres. Council aiming to transfer property to a developer including the Arts Depot. First planning application expected to be for redevelopment of Lodge Lane car park.

The less ambitious Chipping Barnet Community Plan has been adopted with five projects identified for implementation when funds can be secured.

## 6. Any Other Business

(a) KM reported that John Dix had seen an article in The Guardian suggesting there may be a favourable “VIP” approach to planning approval, citing developments in Bishops Avenue and West Heath Rd. For one scheme of 45 luxury flats developer had said there was insufficient profit so Council accepted £1.1 million as a contribution to provision of affordable homes. Also 1.5 parking spaces had been allowed for a PTAL3 location (compared to only 0.6 being allowed for the Victoria Quarter scheme). The Guardian article is here <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/nov/20/affordable-homes-in-billionaires-row-scheme-unviable-says-developer> and the planning application with 66 parking spaces for 45 flats is 20/4748/FUL. JD was also concerned that despite the pressure on the planning dept he understood that one officer had been working on a development in the Brighton area for some two years.. He was raising these issues with the Council.

(b) PS outlined the history of the Pinkham Way site since acquisition by the North London Waste Authority some ten years ago with the intention of establishing there a biological waste plant. Residents successfully opposed the scheme including dismissal of an appeal in 2012. The authority re-wrote their plan in 2019 but the Planning Inspector put safeguards in place such that it would now be difficult to use the site for processing waste. It is now a green field site.

(c) Some RAs have been less than enamoured with planning applications for a proliferation of BT communication hubs in town centres, often replacing redundant telephone boxes. TZ pointed out that they do permit free roaming and also useful for emergency calls. Widespread use could lead to the old large intrusive aerials being removed. He suggested the advertising space might be considered for community use.

7. Next meeting to be arranged in 3-4 months time.