



BATH PRESERVATION TRUST

Planning Update

September 2022

News this Month

- B&NES Publishes **Local Plan 2022-2042 Launch Document** - see 1.1
- B&NES Releases Public Consultation on **Planting of Street Trees** - see 1.2
- The Grade II* **Cleveland Pools** Opens to Swimmers Following Completion of Multi-Million Pound Project - see 1.5
- B&NES Publish Latest **Liveable Neighbourhoods** Report - see 1.4
- Works Begin on Demolition of **Avon Street Car Park** - see 1.6
- Application Submitted for Redevelopment of Gasworks Site at **Western Riverside** - see 2.1
- Demolition of **Waterworks Cottage** Allowed After Submission of Third Demolition Notice - see 2.2
- National Plans for **Fast-Track Planning Route** to Speed Up Major Infrastructure Projects - see 3.2

1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

1.1 Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU): The Inspector's post-hearing letter to the B&NES planning team is now available [here](#). The Inspector has concluded that "subject to main modifications, the Plan is likely to be capable of being found legally compliant and sound." However, the Inspector's examination has not yet finished and the final conclusions on the Plan are forthcoming.

On 8th September, the 2022-2042 Local Plan Launch Document was presented to Cabinet. The Launch Document is intended to commence the process of preparing the new 20-year Local Plan and sets out the purpose, scope and timetable of the Local Plan and how communities and stakeholders can be involved.

[You can read the full Launch Document here.](#)

1.2 Public Consultation on B&NES Street Trees: A new public consultation has been launched for the planting of street trees in areas including Bear Flat, Evelyn Road, Fox Hill, Old Frome Road, Southdown Estate, and Third Avenue. Streets proposed are primarily terraced residential areas, with Third Avenue and Bear Flat targeting areas of Victorian/Edwardian terraces. [See the consultation here; public consultation is open until 3rd October.](#)

1.3 B&NES Affordable Warmth Grant: Low-income households without gas heating will be able to apply for funding to help improve the energy efficiency of their homes. B&NES has

secured funding in partnership with Bristol and North Somerset for £2.7m from the government's Home Upgrade Grant. Eligible households will receive funding and support of up to £25,000 to install a range of energy saving and low carbon technologies including loft, underfloor and wall insulation, air source heat pump central heating systems and solar panels.

Applicants will need to fulfil the following criteria:

- Have a combined annual household income of less than £30,000 pa.
- have an EPC rating of D or lower.
- Have electric or non-gas fossil fuel heating source (oil, coal).
- Live in the B&NES area.
- Be the owner, landlord or private rented tenant of the property.

[Find out more on the Energy at Home website.](#)

1.4 Liveable Neighbourhoods: See the [Liveable Neighbourhoods Report](#) presented to Cabinet on 8th September, summarising the progress of the scheme and general feedback through process of public consultation.

1.5 Reopening of Cleveland Pools: Cleveland Pools welcomed its first swimmers in nearly 40 years on 24th September. The Grade II* lido, formerly on the At Risk Register, has been restored with the aid of a £6.1 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Cleveland Pools are due to be open for the rest of the year for cold water swimming (dates pending), and is due to open in 2023 with a heated swimming offer, generated from a water source heat pump in the River Avon.

[You can check for upcoming opening dates and prices on the Cleveland Pools website.](#)

1.6 Avon Street Car Park: Partial demolition of the multi-storey car park at Avon Street started on 31st August, as part of the wider Bath Quays regeneration project. The upper levels of the car park are to be removed after extensive structural deterioration made the cost of remedial work unrealistic. After demolition of the upper two storeys, the ground floor level of the car park will be refurbished with 88 parking spaces. When the work is completed, Avon Street car park will re-open with a total of 291 parking spaces.

Work on the construction of a safer, two-storey underground car park will start in 2023 as part of the Bath Quays North regeneration scheme. It will include up to 320 public parking spaces.

1.7 Roman Bath and Pump Room: The Roman Baths & Pump Room has come third in Which?'s survey of the best historic attractions in the UK. The Roman Baths has also recently been named Number 1 UK attraction and Number 8 best-rated attraction in the world by Tripadvisor. This follows a summer where over 105,000 people visited in August alone. This was the first time that visitor numbers had reached 100,000 since 2019, pre-pandemic. This has been taken as a positive indication of Bath's recovering tourist economy.

1.8 Bath Area Forum: [Register in advance for the next meeting on 6th October at 6pm.](#)

2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments

2.1 Western Riverside: Application [22/03224/EFUL](#) has been submitted for the development of 616 dwellings on the former Gasworks site on Lower Bristol Road. This follows a series of public consultations held from February 2022. BPT has previously indicated concerns with the apparent ‘piecemeal’ development of the Western Riverside site, and how the design and public realm and infrastructure across multiple phases of development will work together. We further commented on the overly ‘rectilinear’ blocks of development, rather than drawing from earlier examples of curved forms on the site, such as the original gasholders. We maintain serious concerns regarding the overall impact of the development on street and landscape views and the setting of the World Heritage Site, as a result of its cumulative height, scale, and massing, as well as the over-dominant use of buff brick on key elevations across the site.

Our official response will be made available via the planning portal and our website.

2.2 Waterworks Cottage, Fairfield Park: *Demolition notice* [22/03249/DEM](#) for the proposed demolition of Waterworks Cottage, a 19th century NDHA associated with the Charlcombe Water Works. **UPDATE** - The case officer has concluded that Prior Approval is not required for the demolition of the cottage. Two previous demolition notices had been refused on the grounds of insufficient demolition method and ecology documentation. The conservation officer had concluded that there were unfortunately no means of resisting the permitted demolition of the building aside from the implementation of an Article 4 Direction, which had been considered inappropriate and unviable by the council. Demolition works are intended to take place in May - September.

[BPT has maintained a strong opposition to the unjustified demolition of a NDHA of local importance and has continued to push for the cottage’s refurbishment as an attractive family home.](#)

2.3 Arlington House, Bath Street: Application [22/02699/LBA](#) was submitted to address an enforcement notice regarding unauthorised works to paint the Grade I stone colonnade along one side of Bath Street. The application therefore proposes that the masonry paint is removed.

With input from AP&P Committee, BPT welcomed the principle of the reversal of harmful works and the reinstatement of the significant, homogenous appearance of Bath Street. However, we queried the proposed use of a “lime bound sheltercoat [...] should the stonework be found to be in a poor fragile and friable condition” and asked for further information regarding the condition of the stonework, and why the colonnade was painted in the first place. We expressed a preference for the use of lime mortar to effect stonework repairs rather than a limewash.

[BPT’s submitted comments are available here.](#)

2.4 Flat 8, Fitzroy House, 59 Great Pulteney Street: Application [22/02598/LBA](#) proposed the extension of the rear stack extension to provide a roof terrace at third floor level. The works proposed the extension of the existing elevation wall, reinforced with a frameless glazed balustrade. An existing window would be extended to provide access

onto the terrace. It is noted that there is an existing precedent for a roof terrace along this section of the Grade I terrace.

With input from AP&P Committee, BPT emphasised its understanding of the increased demand for outdoor amenity space following the pandemic. We considered that in this instance, it may be feasible for the reuse of the existing flat roof as a roof terrace where visual impact is appropriately mitigated. The use of glazing was felt to be overly contemporary in contrast with the natural Bath stone palette across the terrace rear which would be visible in wider views from the Recreation Ground. It was therefore recommended that the balustrade was formed out of Bath stone to appear more seamlessly as part of the existing extension, and to sustain the material character of the terrace. A solid barrier would also conceal the terrace from public view.

The application has now been withdrawn. There are no comments publicly available from the conservation officer.

[BPT's submitted comments are available here.](#)

2.5 The Bear, 8 - 10 Wellsway: Application [22/02782/FUL](#) proposed the conversion of the flat roof of The Bear pub (a late 20th century building) to a roof terrace to provide outdoor seating for customers. The terrace would be accessed by an existing door at first floor level as well as an external staircase from pavement level.

With input from AP&P Committee, BPT recognised the demand for outdoor seating and considered that the proposed roof terrace offers an opportunity to positively activate the building. However, we considered that the position of the proposed enclosed bar would visually deaden the terrace from the streetscape; it would make more sense to orientate this to the western side of the roof, with additional visual and acoustic benefits for neighbouring residents, and open up views onto the road. There was also an opportunity to improve the landscaping at pavement level and break up this area of predominantly hardstanding.

[BPT's submitted comments are available here.](#)

3. National News

3.1 Levelling Up: UPDATE - The [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#) is currently at Committee stage in the House of Commons.

3.2 Fast-Track Planning Route to Speed Up Major Infrastructure Projects: On 30th August, it was announced that major infrastructure projects such road improvements and offshore wind farms, as well as decisions on smaller (non-material) changes to projects that have already been approved, will be delivered more quickly through a new fast-track planning route. New powers will mean shorter deadlines can be set for examinations of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects - speeding up decisions and getting projects built more quickly.

[Read the full press release here.](#)

3.3 Chancellor announces new Growth Plan: On 23rd September, the Chancellor announced a new Growth Plan intended to tackle rising inflation and living costs. As part of the Plan, it is proposed to introduce new Investment Zones across the UK, to include new “designated development sites to deliver growth and housing.” Planning reform would enable the streamlining of planning processes for major infrastructure and housing developments, but raises some concerns regarding the “proportionate” requirement for public consultation, and the consideration of relevant ecological regulations and assessments. Further details are awaited from The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

[The Growth Plan is available in full here.](#)

3.4 National Case Study: High Court Quashes Consent for Housing on Land Designated as a ‘Green Gap’ in an Emerging Local Plan: Mrs Justice Lang allowed a s.288 challenge to the Secretary of State’s decision to grant planning permission on appeal to Persimmon Homes for the erection of up to 475 houses on land designated as a ‘green gap’ in the emerging South Downs Local Plan. The Court found that the Inspector had failed to take account of the development’s conflict with two policies of the emerging Local Plan and/or failed to give adequate reasons as to the assessment of the development against those policies.

[A copy of the judgment can be found here.](#)