



Planning & Development News

December 2022

News this Month

- BPT's Open Letter in Response to Proposed **Gasworks Development** - see 2.2
- Plans Submitted for Refurbishment of Debenhams Store, Southgate - see 2.4
- B&NES Council Launches Public Consultation on **Proposed Improvements to Foxhill Parks** - see 1.2
- First Three Pilot Schemes Launched for **Liveable Neighbourhoods** - see 1.3
- B&NES Confirms Plans for **Entry Hill Golf Course** Will Not Go Ahead - see 1.4
- Planning Application for Mixed-Use Redevelopment of **Bath Press** Permitted at Planning Committee - see 2.2
- BPT Responds to Revised Development Proposals at **Waterworks Cottage** - see 2.5
- Historic England Publishes **Heritage at Risk Register 2022** - see 3.2
- DLUHC Launches **National Map of Planning Data** - see 3.5

1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

1.1 B&NES Local Plan 2022-2042: BPT's submitted consultation response is [now available on our website.](#)

1.2 B&NES Public Consultation on Foxhill Parks: Proposed improvements for five council-owned green spaces in the Foxhill area of Bath have been revealed and residents are invited to have their say on the new designs. [The public consultation is available here until 6th January.](#)

1.3 Liveable Neighbourhoods: The Bath Area Forum hosted a presentation on [Liveable Neighbourhood](#) updates on 22nd November. [You can watch the recording of the meeting on the B&NES Council YouTube channel.](#) The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 20th February at 6pm; [you can register to attend here.](#)

Three new schemes designed to improve residential neighbourhoods are due to be launched in November 2022 in Church Street, Bath, Southlands in Weston, and Queen Charlton Lane near Whitchurch village as 6-month trials under Bath & North East Somerset's community-led Liveable Neighbourhoods programme. **Public consultations are open for feedback until 17th May - now is the time for communities to get involved.**

[Public consultation for Church Street, Widcombe](#)

[Public consultation for Southlands, Weston](#)

[Public consultation for Queen Charlton Lane](#)

1.4 Entry Hill Bike Park Project: B&NES Council have confirmed that plans for a mountain bike and activity park at the site of the former Entry Hill golf course site in Bath will not proceed. A 20% increase in supply costs alongside additional site costs have impacted on the viability of the proposal which means the Bath Bike Park project cannot progress. The Council's bid to the British Cycling Places to Ride Fund was unsuccessful and due to the current national economic climate, it has become increasingly difficult to attract funding for projects of this nature. Progressing the project further now would require substantial further borrowing at a time of unprecedented financial challenges for all local authorities, which the council will not do.

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

1.5 Upper Bristol Road Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements: New separated cycle lanes have now opened on the A4 Upper Bristol Road, that are part of a vision to help more people leave the car at home for short journeys in and around Bath. New types of bus stops have also come into use which operate by the cycle lane running between the bus stop and the pavement. [Pedestrians have priority at the bus stops and people using the cycle lane must stop to allow bus passengers to get on or off the bus.](#) Crossing points for pedestrians have also been improved with new [continuous footways](#) introduced along the route. The new measures are part of Bath & North East Somerset Council's [active travel scheme.](#)

1.6 Cleveland Pools: The pools are not currently open for cold water swimming as the Cleveland Pools Trust is currently in the process of transferring management to the operator Fusion Lifestyle, the legalities of which are taking some time. Further details are anticipated in January 2023 regarding potential opening dates. The Cleveland Pools Trust is pressing ahead with the [next round of fundraising for the pontoon](#) which will house the ground source heat pump to allow for warm water swimming and offer river access - phase two works will begin next year.

[See the opening of Cleveland Pools on the One Show, featuring BPT's Dr Amy Frost, here.](#)

1.7 MP Wera Hobhouse Calls for Government to Tackle Issue of Sewerage Run-Off: The levels of discharges into Bath and North East Somerset's rivers and lakes are colossal - according to Lib Dem research - with Wessex Water dumping sewage 3,457 times lasting 13,525 hours in 2021. Under current plans, water companies will be allowed to keep dumping sewage until 2050, while they're planning to increase people's water bills by £5 a month, until 2090.

[You can see Wera's question to the House here.](#)

[Read the Bath Newseum press release here.](#)

1.8 Queen Square Junction Improvements: Works to this city centre junction have paused, and the junction reopened, to ease traffic over the Christmas period. Temporary footway surfaces have been installed; these will be replaced with traditional pennant stone paving when work resumes, and sections of footway will be widened to allow more room for walking and wheeling. The council will leave signs around the junction giving advance notice that works will resume in the New Year.

[Read the update here.](#)

1.9 Bath Spa Railway Station Clock: It has been reported that the clock and gable end have been removed from the principal elevation of the Grade II* Bath Spa Railway Station, following emergency scaffolding and remedial works in response to ongoing structural issues. An explanation has been received from First Great Western that the decorative gable was at risk of falling and was removed to make the station safe and fully accessible to the Christmas markets, prior to longer-term repairs. Further works are anticipated to require listed building consent.

[See the update on Bath Newseum.](#)

2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments

2.1 Western Riverside: Application [22/03224/EFUL](#) for the development of 616 residential dwellings on the former Gasworks site south of the river, as part of the next phase of the Western Riverside development.

BPT has published an open letter response expressing our major concerns with impact of proposals on the World Heritage Site [is now available on our website.](#)

[Read BPT's objection response to the application on our website here.](#)

2.2 Bath Press: Application [21/05672/EFUL](#) for the mixed-use redevelopment of the Bath Press site was referred to Planning Committee on 16th November, with a recommendation to delegate to permit. [BPT submitted a statement](#) objecting to proposals on grounds of the unacceptable lack of any affordable housing from the scheme. The case officer noted that the application had addressed the previous reasons for refusal (see previous application [20/04760/EFUL](#)). Councillors continued to have concerns with aspects of the scheme but recognised that improvements had been made on the previous submission and were generally supportive of the principle of regenerating a currently unused brownfield site. It was unanimously voted to delegate to permit the application.

2.3 Lidl, London Road: Lidl GB and Bath Rugby (Arena 1865) have exchanged contracts on part of the land owned by the club at Lambridge, Bath, with the intention that Lidl GB will deliver a bespoke new and highly sustainable food store beside Bath RFC's existing training facilities. Before a planning application is submitted to Bath & North East Somerset Council, Lidl will undertake detailed public consultation and residents will be able to view the proposals and comment online through the project website. [All project details are available here.](#)

BPT is continuing to monitor the application and will publicly respond in due course when an application comes forwards.

2.4 Debenhams, Southgate: Application [22/04328/FUL](#) proposes the redevelopment of the purpose-built Debenhams store, which forms part of the Southgate development completed in 2009. Debenhams closed in 2021 and has been vacant since. The proposals intend to refurbish the building to create new offices across the first, second, and third floors. The windows at second floor level would be enlarged to improve the natural light and ventilation to the upper floor office spaces. Works would also include the extension of the third floor, and creation of new roof terraces as well as the installation of a solar array to generate power and heating for the building. BPT was invited to offer initial comments at pre-application stage. We have subsequently considered the submitted application with the support of our Architecture, Planning, and Place Committee; we remain supportive of the principle of bringing the building back into long-term use, but expressed some concerns about the proposed enlargement of the second-floor windows and works to the ground floor colonnade. We have submitted our comments to the case officer, including recommended revisions to the scheme.

[Read BPT's full consultation response on our website.](#)

2.5 Waterworks Cottage: Application [22/04122/FUL](#) was submitted with revised proposals for the development of the Waterworks Cottage to provide two new-build detached houses. This scheme would be dependent on the demolition of the 19th century Waterworks Cottage, for which it has already been separately confirmed that prior approval is not required. BPT has continued to reiterate concerns with the adverse impact of development on local townscape character and the setting of the conservation area and World Heritage Site, as per our previous response to refused application [20/04067/FUL](#).

[Read BPT's full objection response on our website.](#)

2.6 10 Hampton Row: Retrospective application [22/03966/LBA](#) sought to regularise unauthorised works for the application of tarmac over the front gardens of the Grade II terraced buildings at 10-14 Hampton Row. This follows a pattern of unauthorised works and enforcement action at the terrace, including the facing of the rear two storey extensions in reconstituted stone (previously permitted in Bath stone ashlar) where the enforcement notice was recently upheld at appeal. BPT opposed this inappropriate use of hard surfacing and loss of original boundary lines, with resulting harm to the group value of a Grade II terrace and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

[Read BPT's full objection response on our website.](#)

2.7 Midford Castle: Appeal [APP/F0114/C/22/3307537](#) has been submitted in response to an enforcement notice that the current development on the site is in breach of planning permission. Planning permission was previously granted for a partially-subterranean agricultural barn on the site (see application [21/01555/FUL](#)), but the barn as-built appears to be a much larger two storey structure. BPT has submitted a statement calling for the appeal to be dismissed on grounds that the increased scale of development would fail to reflect or respond to the sensitive nature of the site and the relationship between the Grade I castle and its intentional, rural landscape setting.

[Read our appeal statement on our website.](#)

3. National News

3.1 Government's Autumn Budget: See the [Heritage Alliance's summary of the Government's Autumn Budget](#) and what it means for heritage and the wider sector.

3.2 Heritage at Risk 2022: Historic England has released its 2022 register of Heritage at Risk. In Bath, Cleveland Pools has officially been removed from the list in recognition of the completed project to restore the Grade II* Pools and bring them back into public use. However, the Grade II* footbridge north of Sydney Gardens Road has now been added to the Register: "The paint finish is no longer providing protection to the ironwork beneath with many areas of rust apparent." [You can see the Register entry here.](#)

3.3 Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs) Consultations: Historic England are currently drafting two new HEANs which will be opened up for consultation in the coming months. These include *Managing Change Affecting World Heritage Sites in England*, which would be of particular interest to Bath, and *Climate Change and the Historic Environment*. To monitor for further updates and involvement in the consultation process. [Historic England's open consultations can be accessed on their website.](#)

3.4 Trial of New Planning Appeal Submission Process: A number of local authorities are trialling a new 'beta' planning appeal system for the submission of householder and full planning decisions (s.78). The main difference will be a simpler, more intuitive appeal submission process, using standardised government formats, which are familiar across government services. Eligible users will be able to start their appeal on GOV.UK instead of the Appeals Casework Portal (ACP). The submission form includes built in guidance as well as validation to ensure appeals are submitted with all the correct information. South-West authorities involved in the trial include Bristol Council.

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

3.5 National Map of Planning Data: DLUHC has [launched the National Map of Planning Data](#). The publicly accessible Map is still in the development stage and does not yet cover all of England, nor is the data complete. The map forms part of the digitisation programme for planning in England. Layers on the map include article 4 directions, conservation area and other natural, built and historic environmental data.

3.6 New Visitor Centre for Saltaire World Heritage Site: [Plans have been released for public consultation](#), proposing a new Community Arts, Heritage, and Future Technology within the Victorian model village, a World Heritage Site. The Centre would provide a new location for the Saltaire Collection as well as education and exhibition space. Local residents have expressed concerns with the addition of a new-build within the heart of the historic village and how this would affect Saltaire's World Heritage Site designation.

3.7 Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site Museum: [A tender has been issued by the Jurassic Coast Trust](#), to investigate the feasibility of a new museum dedicated to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site (JCWHS) and its outstanding geology, palaeontology and geomorphology.