



# BATH PRESERVATION TRUST

## Planning Update

August 2021

### BPT Events

Tickets are now available to pre-book for the immersive Jane Austen Experience at No 1 Royal Crescent in September. You can book via our website: <https://bath-preservation-trust.merlintickets.co.uk/product/EV0021>

We still have a few tickets left for a series of themed walking tours led by our volunteers around the city. This walk will introduce the daily routines of the aristocracy, entertainments of the day and a background history to some of the finest Palladian architecture anywhere. Jane Austen fans can see where the iconic author lived and found inspiration for her novels *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*. Certain dates are available until 26<sup>th</sup> September. You can book via our website: <https://bath-preservation-trust.merlintickets.co.uk/product/EVE-BPT-WALK>

### News this Month

- Upcoming consultation on the **Local Plan Partial Update and associated Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** - see 1.1
- Bath achieves **Great Spas of Europe World Heritage Status** - see 1.2
- Proposed demolition of **old gas works bridges** - see 1.4
- Ongoing consultation on the **Milsom Quarter masterplan** - see 1.8
- Hotel conversion of **the Mineral Hospital (The Min)** permitted at Planning Committee - see 2.1
- Consent granted for the change of use of the **Old King Edward's School** into a hotel with ground floor restaurant/bar - see 2.2
- Proposed development of **Waterworks Cottage** site refused at Planning Committee - see 2.4
- Publication of **revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - see 3.3

## 1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

**1.1 Local Plan Partial Update:** Following approval at cabinet, the Local Plan Partial Update will be available for public consultation from 27<sup>th</sup> August to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021. As part of the consultation, three SPDs are being reviewed and updated, and will also be available for public consultation alongside the Local Plan:

- Transport, specifically parking standards, ultra-low emissions vehicles, walking and cycling infrastructure design and design for new development.

- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), increasing the scope of existing policy to refer new build HMOs and change of use to HMO.
- Energy Efficiency Retrofitting and Sustainable Construction (which combines two existing SPDs to better align and help deliver the council's core aims), which will set out measures for homeowners and occupiers on adapting their dwellings to reduce energy use.

Work on a new Local Plan is due to begin in 2022.

You can read the report in full via the council website:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=32569&PlanId=788&RPID=32621313>

**1.3 Great Spa Towns of Europe:** Bath along with ten other historic spa towns has secured much-coveted UNESCO World Heritage status as part of the 'Great Spa Towns of Europe' nomination. It means that the City of Bath, will have an exceptional second inscription, overlaying the first. The Great Spa Towns of Europe project focuses on historic spa towns, based around mineral springs, which formed fashionable resorts of health, leisure and recreational 'diversions' such as gambling and dancing from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

You can find out more about the nomination here: <https://www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk/the-great-spa-towns-of-europe/>

**1.3 Bath with NES - One Shared Vision:** One Shared Vision is part of B&NES Council's response to the Covid crisis to address the wide-ranging impacts experienced across the district. A series of 'stories' have been developed about how people could work together to achieve a stronger, low carbon and more inclusive economy. The stories have been developed through collaboration with local businesses, public sector, university and education and community, third sector organisations and other stakeholders.

You can read the report via the council website:

[https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Ambitious%20Together\\_Digital%20Report\\_Update%2021.06\\_7\\_Accessibility%20checked\\_Compressed\\_1.pdf](https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Ambitious%20Together_Digital%20Report_Update%2021.06_7_Accessibility%20checked_Compressed_1.pdf)

**1.4 Proposed Demolition of Old Gas Works Bridges:** The demolition of two historic bridges either side of New Windsor Bridge is being discussed by council chiefs with contractors. The bridges originally carried gas pipes and coal across the river to the Old Gas Works but are now redundant, and feature prominently in views from the Bristol and Bath railway path. Councillors are being encouraged to consider restoration works of a rare survivor of Bath's industrial heritage for potential pedestrian and cyclist use. BPT is currently involved in discussions and is keen to see the bridges retained and refurbished.

**1.5 Bathscape 2021:** Bathscape has released the programme of walks for its popular annual walking festival in September. Bathscape's Walking Festival will run 11-26 September and will also be promoted as part of the council's Climate and Biodiversity Festival which runs 13-26 September.

You can read the timetable of events here:

<https://www.bathscapewalkingfestival.co.uk/walks/>

**1.6 Social Distancing Barriers:** From 19<sup>th</sup> July, B&NES Council's highways teams will be removing the red and white barriers which were installed to help with social distancing. Any parking spaces that were temporarily removed will be restored. Temporary access restrictions in the city centre will remain in place for now to give people confidence to return to some of the more popular but sometimes crowded parts of Bath. In Kingsmead Square and Milsom Street the restrictions will continue as experimental traffic regulation orders and a consultation will be launched over the coming months to enable people to have their say over whether or not these should be made permanent.

**1.7 Bathavon Area Forum to Focus on Climate Emergency:** Residents in the Bathavon area are being invited to learn more about the action being taken by the council's planning team to tackle the Climate Emergency at their area Connecting Communities Forum. The meeting is open to all residents and will be held on Thursday 12 August at 5pm via Zoom. The main showcase will be on climate emergency and will include a presentation on from the Chew Valley Forum on their successful approach in setting up Climate & Nature Emergency Working Groups, but will also include an update from the planning team including how residents will be able to get involved with the consultation on the Local Plan Partial Update.

**1.8 Cleveland Pools:** The Cleveland Pools Trust is curating a new exhibition at the Holburne Museum called *Making a Splash* from 24<sup>th</sup> August - 5<sup>th</sup> September. It will provide a visual account of the history of swimming whilst also providing an update on the progress of the Cleveland Pools project. Volunteers are working to raise an additional £400,000 ahead of the Pools' scheduled opening for summer 2022.

**1.9 Milsom Quarter Masterplan Consultation:** The Council is seeking to create a more vibrant and diverse part of the city with a greater balance in the mix of uses, activity and increased residential development, in an area of increasing vacancy and decreased footfall. The masterplan would encompass Milsom Street, John Street, Quiet Street, Green Street, New Bond Street, Old Bond Street, Burton Street, Upper Borough Court, a section of Broad Street, and the Cattle Market.

BPT was invited to a stakeholder meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July. The presented proposals covered the following:

- Intention to maintain retail and active uses at ground floor level.
- Reuse of vacant/underused upper floors to provide residential accommodation.
- Possibility of combining 'making' and 'selling' spaces within the same building
- Improve east-west routes and courtyard spaces towards the river.
- Increased 'greening' of streets where appropriate to tackle the 'heat island' effect and improve biodiversity.
- Possibility of energy efficiency retrofits across B&NES properties, such as PV installations at roof level.

A drafted masterplan is due to be released for public consultation in late August.

Further information about the masterplan can be accessed via the council website:

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/local-plan-core-strategy-and-placemaking-plan-partial-update/milsom-quarter-new-area>

**1.10 High Street Renewal:** On 20<sup>th</sup> July, Cabinet agreed to accept £1.235m grant funding to boost high street activity as part of a Bath City Centre High Street Renewal project. The scheme proposes a five-year plan for public realm enhancements on Milsom Street and Kingsmead Square, including new decorative installations and new street furniture which will be compliant with the Pattern Book. Where new types of furniture are proposed, these will be consulted on and an addendum made to the Pattern Book. The Vacant Units Action Project aims to find new uses for vacant high street shops and spaces as part of the High Street Renewal project.

You can access the initial concept designs via the council website:

<https://newsroom.bathnes.gov.uk/news/cabinet-consider-bath-city-centre-high-street-renewal-plans>

## **2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments**

**2.1 The Mineral Hospital (The Min):** Applications [21/01752/FUL](#) & [21/01753/LBA](#) for the change of use of the Mineral Hospital to a hotel with a new three storey rear extension.

**UPDATE** - Applications for the conversion of the Min to a hotel went to Planning Committee on 28th July. BPT submitted a written statement in support of the application due to amendments made to the design. Councillors considered concerns with the future management of the green walls and sedum roof, and difficulties of car/disabled access to the front of the Min. However, the design was felt to have improved significantly and councillors emphasised the need for listed buildings “to live in the timeframes that they are in”. Councillors voted 9-0 on both applications to support the officer’s recommendation to permit. The current appeal for the 2019 applications ([19/04933/FUL](#) & [19/04934/LBA](#)) will be withdrawn.

**2.2 Old King Edward’s School:** Applications [21/00695/LBA](#) & [21/00692/VAR](#) for the proposed change of use of the Grade II\* Old King Edward’s School from a school to a hotel. **UPDATE** - Application 21/00692/VAR has been permitted. It was clarified that there would be one bar on the ground floor in the large classroom for improved circulation, but there would be no additional bar provision on-site. Further conditions have been attached to the permit restricting amplified music, external lighting, outdoor seating on the Broad Street terraces, and the active use hours and maximum capacity (110) of the rear courtyard.

**2.3 Dick Lovett:** Application [20/03071/EFUL](#) for the mixed-use redevelopment of the Dick Lovett car dealerships to provide residential and student accommodation. **UPDATE** - The application was scheduled to go to Planning Committee on 28th July. BPT was registered to speak against the scheme on grounds of overdevelopment by virtue of its excessive depth, scale, massing, and height, and failure to sustain or respond to local distinctiveness through the excessive use of inappropriate materials, alien form, height variation, and roof articulation. Revised plans were submitted, and the application was therefore pulled from the register to allow for plans to be reviewed in advance of going to committee. Planning Committee date pending.

**2.4 Waterworks Cottage:** Application [20/04067/FUL](#) for the development of two dwellings in the garden of the locally listed Waterworks Cottage. **UPDATE** - The

application went to Planning Committee on 28th July following a deferred decision on 30th June in favour of a site visit by councillors. BPT reiterated that the application would constitute overdevelopment of a garden site, being of a detrimental grain and density to the townscape and the setting of the Green Belt and AONB. Councillors voted 6 - 2 to refuse the application on grounds of overdevelopment of the site, harm to the cottage garden setting of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset, failure to contribute to local character and distinctiveness, failure to conserve or enhance the landscape, and loss of biodiversity.

**2.5 Green Park Mews:** Application [21/02416/LBA](#) for the roof extension of a Grade II former coach house to convert the first floor loft into a home office space. **UPDATE** - The application has been withdrawn. Historic England outlined concerns regarding the potential loss of historic roof fabric, and harm to the appearance and character of the building by opening the 'blind' first floor windows on the rear elevation and the installation of street-facing rooflights.

**2.6 5G Mast, Old Fosse Road:** Application [21/03024/TEL](#) for the installation of an 18m 5G monopole on Old Fosse Road. **UPDATE** - BPT has voiced concerns regarding a new application or an 18m 5G monopole on Old Fosse Road. We felt the addition of an 18m monopole within a 2 storey residential context would be visually incongruous. We additionally raised concerns with potential impact on wider landscape views. We continue to emphasise the need for a masterplan across the World Heritage Site for ongoing and future mast installations. The application was refused on grounds of harm to the visual amenity of the area and failure to respond to the character of the area.

**2.7 Site Adjacent to Old School House, Chapel Row, Bathford:** Application [20/00236/FUL](#) for the erection of a one bedroom detached dwelling on Chapel Row. **UPDATE** Appeal [APP/F0114/W/21/3267381](#) for a single storey dwelling on Chapel Row has been dismissed on grounds of harm to the long-term retention of the copper beech tree, and associated less than substantial harm to the conservation area. This is the second appeal to be dismissed for a development of this scale on this site for reasons of the adverse impact of development within the tree's RPA.

**2.8 34 North Road:** Application [21/03019/FUL](#) for the construction of a 2 storey 4-bed dwelling within the garden of 34 North Road. **UPDATE** - BPT felt that the principle of development in this area coupled with the low-profile and visually recessive design of the dwelling was acceptable. We are keen to see the delivery of a 'passive house' as an examples of new, sustainable development in Bath. BPT emphasised the need for [Passivehaus](#) principles to be incorporated into the design through to the construction phase to avoid being a 'passive house' in name only.

**2.9 25 Upper East Hayes:** Application [21/02863/FUL](#) for the redevelopment of the existing 20<sup>th</sup> century bungalow into a 2 storey 4-bed dwelling. **UPDATE** - BPT was supportive of the principle of redeveloping the existing bungalow on the site. However, we objected on grounds of the inappropriate use of timber cladding and concerns with the unbroken form and massing of the first floor extension as viewed within the streetscape. We had some concerns regarding the viability of retrofitting the existing building.

### **3. National News**

**3.1 Liverpool World Heritage Site:** Liverpool has been stripped of its World Heritage status by UNESCO, after a UN committee found developments threatened the value of the city's waterfront. Liverpool is only the third site to lose its World Heritage status since the list began in 1978. Since 2012, UNESCO had warned that development had significantly changed the city's skyline and was destroying the heritage value of its waterfront.

You can find out more about Liverpool's World Heritage Site and why it was delisted via UNESCO's website: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1150/>

**3.2 Ministry of Housing, Culture and Local Government (MHCLG) Releases Permitted Development (PD) Rights Report:** MHCLG has released a new report looking at the most recent changes to PD rights. Vacant high street buildings in a commercial use (Class E) can now be converted to residential use (Class C3) without planning permission, although restrictions remain on listed buildings and in World Heritage Sites. The report recommended Government should pause any further extensions to PD rights to review how well they work as part of the planning system, as works under PD rights cannot be consulted on by local communities in the same way as planning applications.

You can read the report in full via the government website: [https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5802/cmselect/cmcomloc/32/3203.htm#\\_idTextAnchor000](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5802/cmselect/cmcomloc/32/3203.htm#_idTextAnchor000)

**3.3 Publication of Revised NPPF:** The revised NPPF was published on 20 July 2021. The 2021 edition now overrides the previous 2019 edition. Changes include:

- A new paragraph on the protection of historic statues and monuments.
- An emphasis on 'beauty' and place-making in new development.
- Local authorities are required to prepare design guides and codes to inform new development in local areas.
- Increased pressure on the creation of new Article 4 Directions, to restrict PD rights.

You can read the revised edition of the NPPF in full via the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

**3.4 UK Housing Demand Call for Evidence:** The new House of Lords Built Environment Committee has launched an inquiry into housing demand in the UK. The inquiry will investigate how to deliver different types of housing to meet national demand, and how factors such as housing type and quality can affect the number of houses delivered every year. The current national target is 300,000 new homes per year. This inquiry will also consider how barriers to meeting the UK's housing demand can be overcome, such as skills shortages. The Committee invites written evidence to be submitted by **10 September 2021**.

You can submit written evidence via the government website: <https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/521/>

**3.5 Launch of the Summer of Walking and Cycling Campaign:** The Summer of Walking and Cycling campaign was launched on 30<sup>th</sup> July. It proposes to improve walking and cycling routes around the UK and encourage 'active travel' with a £338m budget. A new version of the Highway Code will strengthen pedestrian priority and improve safety for

cyclists on the road. As part of the scheme, Victorian railway bridges that were due to be filled in with concrete will be repurposed for walking and cycling, following backlash from the concrete infill of the bridge in Great Musgrave, Cumbria.

You can read the proposals via the government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/338-million-package-to-further-fuel-active-travel-boom>

**3.6 Build Back Better High Streets:** The Build Back Better High Streets Strategy was published on 15<sup>th</sup> July. It sets out the government's long-term plan to support the post-Covid recovery of high streets. It sets out government action across 5 areas:

1. Breathing new life into empty buildings.
2. Supporting high street businesses.
3. Improving the public realm.
4. Creating safe and clean spaces.
5. Celebrating pride in local communities.

You can read the report in full via the government website:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005041/Build\\_Back\\_Better\\_High\\_Streets.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005041/Build_Back_Better_High_Streets.pdf)