



Planning & Development News

June 2023

News this Month

- New Cabinet Announced for **Bath & North East Somerset Council** - see 1.1
- B&NES Council launches **Call for Nature Sites** - see 1.6
- Bath Rugby Club Submit Scoping Opinion Application for Development of a **New Stadium at the Rec** - see 2.1
- Planning Application Submitted for Residential Development of **B&NES-Owned Gasworks Site, Lower Bristol Road** - see 2.2
- Further Amendments to **Sulis Down Planning Application** Under Review - see 2.3
- Public Consultation Launched for **New Lidl Store** on London Road - see 2.4
- Latest Application for **Two Dwellings on Deadmill Lane Site** Refused on Grounds of Green Belt Harm - see 2.5
- BPT Raises Concerns with Proposals for **New Dwelling at 21 Darlington Place** - see 2.7
- BPT Supports Energy Retrofit and Introduction of Solar Slates at **Grade II Malthouse, Sydney Buildings** - see 2.8
- BPT Expresses Ongoing Concerns with **Proposed Conversion of Widcombe Studios & Loss of Historic Fabric** - see 2.10
- BPT Responds to **Government Consultation for Use Class for Short Term Holiday Lets** - see 3.1

1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

1.1 New Cabinet for Bath & North East Somerset Council: The new leader and cabinet members, who will steer the majority-led Liberal Democrat council for B&NES, have been named. Councillor Kevin Guy was appointed as Leader at B&NES Council's Annual Meeting on 25th May.

[The full list of cabinet members is available here.](#)

1.2 Help for Residents to Reduce Household Emissions: Low-income households without gas heating will be able to apply for funding to install energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating in their homes. B&NES Council has partnered with Bristol City Council and North Somerset Council to secure £11m funding through the government's Home Upgrade Grant: Phase 2 which runs until March 2025. The scheme will be administered by Bristol City Leap.

[Find out more about the scheme and eligibility criteria here.](#)

1.3 One Year Anniversary of Bath World Heritage Centre: The Bath World Heritage Centre recently celebrated its anniversary, a year after it first opened in May 2022. Since opening, the centre has welcomed more than 72,000 local and international visitors. Supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the centre is a springboard for people to engage with the city's culture, history and heritage and explore popular Bath landmarks as well as lesser-known places around the city.

[Find out more about the Bath World Heritage Centre here.](#)

1.4 Active Travel Funding Update: Plans for a proposed cycle and walking scheme connecting residential areas to educational establishments across the south of Bath will continue, despite confirmation that an initial bid for funding was unsuccessful. A bid had been submitted for £2.7 million funding to complete the first section of The Scholars' Way scheme, to provide a cycle route with pedestrian facilities between Claverton Down, Combe Down and Odd Down. Councillor Sarah Warren confirmed that the council would commit to progress the scheme together with the Bath Quays Links scheme, looking at alternative funding routes.

One of the schemes which received funding will see B&NES receive an additional 20 on-street cycle hangars each accommodating six bicycles.

[Read the full news story here.](#)

1.5 Bath Residents' Parking Zones: Two residents' parking zones in Bath are set to go live from July 31 following extensive public consultation. The zones will be introduced in the Oldfield Park and Westmoreland, and Walcot, Snow Hill and Claremont Road areas of Bath. Works are due to run 12th - 20th June, including temporary road closures and parking suspensions to allow for the painting of new road markings and erection of signage. In both areas residents will not need a permit to park in the zones until the official launch date on 31 July, but are welcome to apply for their permits from 3 July.

[Read the full news story here.](#)

1.6 Council launches Call for Nature Sites: B&NES Council are seeking landowners and leaseholders interested in making a positive contribution to nature recovery, to get involved in this scheme to improve biodiversity and create new areas of wildlife habitat. There are opportunities for landowners of suitable sites to benefit from new funding options and new projects for nature. The Call for Nature Sites will allow the council to collaborate with landowners and introduce them to nature recovery opportunities.

[Find out more about the project here.](#)

1.7 Redevelopment of Council Depot Significantly Lowers Emissions: Investment in a B&NES Council highways depot has resulted in an 89% reduction in carbon emissions since its redevelopment two years ago. Works included replacing the existing office facility with a new office building with energy efficient windows, lighting and a heating and cooling system that retains up to 70% of the building's heat. Over an 18-month period, an energy saving of 14.5t CO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) was made, with an estimated cost saving of almost £20,000.

[Read the full news story here.](#)

2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments

2.1 The Rec: Scoping Opinion application [23/01618/SCOPE](#) has come forward for the development of a new stadium on the Recreation Ground. This is not a full planning application, but a Scoping Opinion request that asks the Council to set out the scope and level of detail of the information to be provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). A decision is anticipated from B&NES Council by 16th June.

[View the Scoping Opinion application here.](#)

2.2 Gasworks, Western Riverside: Planning application [23/01762/EREG03](#) has now been submitted by B&NES Council with proposals for up to 351 No. dwellings and dual-use flexible space for community and/or commercial use, on the eastern portion of the Gasworks site. The proposed B&NES site would connect the Phase 1 Grimshaw portion of the Western Riverside site with the St William portion of the Gasworks, on which there is currently an active planning application (see [22/03224/EFUL](#)). The B&NES proposals comprise a mix of residential maisonettes and apartments, with a building height ranging from 4-7 storeys with an 8-storey block on the north-western corner.

The application is open for public consultation until 17th July; [view and respond to the planning application here.](#)

2.3 Sulis Down: Amended documents have been submitted to application [22/02169/EOUT](#) for up to 300 homes as part of Phase 3 & 4 of the Sulis Down development. Changes have included the removal of the Phase 3 & 4 allotments from Derrymans Field to the west of the allocated development site, to be incorporated along the western boundary of Phase 3 as well as a connecting north-south footpath.

The application is open for public consultation until 17th June; [view and respond to the planning application here.](#)

2.4 Lidl, London Road: A public consultation has been launched online for proposals for a new Lidl supermarket on the London Road. [View and respond to the virtual public consultation here.](#)

BPT has released a public statement online in response to the proposed plans. We have emphasised the need to carefully consider factors such as biodiversity net gain, the sensitivity of the adjoining area and the townscape and landscape setting of the World Heritage Site in relation to proposals. [Read BPT's public statement here.](#)

2.5 Deadmill Lane: Application [23/00893/FUL](#) for the development of two flat-roofed detached dwellings on the greenfield site along Deadmill Lane, situated within the Green Belt and the indicative setting of the Bath Conservation Area. **UPDATE** - The application was refused on grounds of inappropriate development in the Green Belt, harm to the local landscape character, features, distinctiveness and views, and harm to the setting of a non-designated heritage assets.

BPT continues to monitor applications [22/01220/FUL](#) and [23/00893/FUL](#) where it is anticipated that the refusal decisions may be appealed.

2.6 BT Street Hubs, City Centre: Applications [23/00211/FUL](#), [23/00213 /FUL](#), and [23/00215/FUL](#) for three new BT '2.0 Street Hubs', including LED advertisement screens, offering free public services including access to emergency and council services, phone charging, 4G & 5G connectivity, as well as monitoring of air quality and traffic. **UPDATE** - The conservation officer has objected to application [23/00211/FUL](#) for a BT street hub on Terrace Walk, on grounds of "harm to the setting and significance of numerous listed buildings, the significance of the conservation area, the universal value of the World Heritage Site as well as the wider character of the public realm." The B&NES Regeneration Team has also objected where the proposed signage would be contrary to B&NES guidance regarding commercial signage in the city centre. Similar objections have been raised to applications [23/00213 /FUL](#) and [23/00215/FUL](#), the former having been withdrawn.

2.7 21 Darlington Place: Application [23/01365/FUL](#) proposed the demolition of the existing 1970s dwelling on the site, to be replaced with a new three storey contemporary dwelling in black timber cladding. The existing two bay garage would also be demolished and replaced with a two storey 'coach house', incorporating a garage at ground floor and a workshop/garden room at first floor. The site is sensitively located, forming part of the setting of the Grade II terrace at Sydney Buildings as well as Bath's wider landscape setting where it closely abuts Bathwick Fields to the east and part of the Skyline trail. Works have already been undertaken to clear a large number of trees from the site.

AP&P objected to the application on grounds of harm to the setting and significance of a group of listed buildings, and failure to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. There is insufficient information relating to the degree of landscape impact, and associated impact to the OUV of the World Heritage Site.

[Read BPT's consultation response here.](#)

2.8 The Malthouse, Sydney Buildings: Application [23/01378/LBA](#) proposed the retrofit and energy efficiency upgrade of a Grade II 19th century former Malthouse, now offices, along the K&A Canal. Works proposed included the replacement of all existing 20th century windows and doors with slimlite double glazed units, and the addition of PV solar slates to the south-east roof slope.

AP&P Committee supported the application, where this would improve the thermal performance of a listed building. The use of slimlite double glazing was supported in principle where no historic fabric would be lost. The use of solar slates remains an uncommon technology within Bath, and it was considered that this could form a definitive case study on the integration of solar across Bath's historic building stock, but further details should be provided.

[Read BPT's consultation response here.](#)

2.9 Belgrave Cottage: Application [23/01275/LBA](#) proposed the addition of a new single storey rear extension to a Grade II listed terraced dwelling. The extension would replace a series of 20th century extensions already in situ and would provide a kitchen-diner space at lower ground floor level, connected with the garden.

AP&P Committee supported the application and recognised the restrictions of the existing building as a family home with limited internal space. The proposed extension would be of constrained visibility, restricted to close-range views from Belgrave Crescent but otherwise obscured by the steep slope of the site and obscured by the existing roadside garage.

[Read BPT's consultation response here.](#)

2.10 Widcombe Studios: Application [23/01211/FUL](#) was submitted with revised proposals for the residential conversion of the former St Mark's Infants School, now recognised as a non-designated heritage asset. Proposals are now for the extension and conversion of the building to create 7x 3 & 4 bed dwellings. Former withdrawn proposals were for the conversion of the building to provide 22x 1-bed studio apartments.

AP&P Committee welcomed the provision of housing suited to families, though there were some questions as to how this house type would work in this location and the practicalities of limited off-street parking and a communal garden. The proposed design of the extension had improved in relation to the previous withdrawn application, but there were continued concerns regarding the intersection of the extension with the main building, as well as the overall loss of historic fabric resulting from the demolition of the western hall and the creation of openings in the northern elevation.

[Read BPT's consultation response here.](#)

2.11 Buildings at End of Walnut Drive, Oldfield Park: *Application [23/00235/FUL](#) for the demolition of the existing 19th century coach house to build a contemporary three-bed dwelling. This would supersede existing planning permission for the refurbishment/rebuild of the existing coach house to create a two-bed dwelling.* **UPDATE** - The application has been withdrawn following objections raised by the conservation officer.

3. National News

3.1 Government Consultation on Short-Term Lets in England: The government released a public consultation seeking feedback on three potential approaches to the creation of a registration scheme for short-term holiday lets, with the intention of controlling numbers of holiday lets and their associated impact on the local area. The registration scheme would be intended as an additional steps to help local areas to manage the further proliferation of short-term lets and support sustainable communities. The new permitted development rights would provide flexibility where short-term lets are not a local issue, and allow for this flexibility to be removed where there is a local concern.

BPT has responded to the consultation, supporting the introduction of a new use class where this would be supported by appropriate local policies. [Read our consultation response here.](#)

3.2 Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill: On 18th May, the Government published its [response to the Permitted Development Rights report](#) by the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee. In their response, the government acknowledges the committee's recommendations and commits to reviewing and considering necessary amendments to the planning system to balance development, quality, and local control.

3.3 High Street Rental Auctions & Permitted Development: On 31st March, DLUHC launched a consultation on the High Street Rental Auction policy, introduced in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. High Street Rental Auctions are designed to bring disused commercial properties back into use, by letting Councils auction off a lease for between 1-5 years. Two new permitted development rights would allow commercial buildings to be converted to other uses, or divided up into multiple units during these leases, and for these changes to be made permanent at the end of the lease.

[The consultation closes on 23 June; see the consultation here.](#)

3.4 Historic England Publications: Historic England has published *Heat Pumps in Historic Buildings*, a report on the findings of study of ten small-scale historic properties with air source heat pumps installed as their primary means of space heating. [Read the report here.](#) Work is ongoing to draft two new Advice Notes on Managing Change Affecting World Heritage Sites in England, and Climate Change and Historic Environment. Public consultation on the guidance will be announced in the coming months.

3.5 Programme to Trial Pre-App Process for National Infrastructure Projects: The Planning Inspectorate is trialling potential components of a future enhanced pre-application service for National Infrastructure via the National Infrastructure Early Adopters Programme. Projects with an anticipated submission between September 2023 and March 2024 are invited to express interest in taking part.

[Find out more about the programme here.](#)

3.6 Historic England's Enrich the List: The Enrich the List project by Historic England has been rebranded as the Missing Pieces Project. Based on public feedback, the new name is intended to encourage even more people to share their unique takes on the places they find.

[Find out more about the Missing Pieces Project here.](#)

[Watch their new film here.](#)