



BATH PRESERVATION TRUST

Planning Update

May 2022

News this Month

- Announcement of dates for Examination hearing sessions for the **Local Plan Partial Update** - see 1.1
- Public consultation released for **Milsom Quarter masterplan** - see 1.2
- Local residents invited to co-design workshops for **Liveable Neighbourhoods** - see 1.3
- Second public consultation for **Western Riverside 'Gasworks' Site** - see 2.1
- BPT opposes proposed demolition of **Waterworks Cottage** - see 2.3
- Proposed demolition of defunct gas pipeline bridge at **Windsor Bridge** - see 2.4
- Publication of the new **Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill** - see 3.1
- Government publication of the **British Energy Security Strategy**- see 3.2

1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

1.1 Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU): The LPPU Hearing Sessions will commence at **9.30am on Tuesday 21 June 2022**, within the Elwin Room of the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institute, 16-18 Queen Square, Bath, BA1 2HN. The Hearings will resume for a second week on **Tuesday 5 July at 9.30am** within the Brunswick Room of The Guildhall, High Street, Bath, BA1 5AW.

The Hearing may be attended in person but will not be livestreamed online.

[Details of the LPPU hearing can be found here.](#)

1.2 Milsom Quarter Masterplan: Initial proposals for the Milsom Quarter masterplan have been made available for public consultation. Plans include the creation of 180 new homes across underutilised upper floors on Milsom Street and Broad Street, public realm improvements and traffic restrictions to prioritise sustainable transport, and areas of new residential and commercial development in Broad Street car park and the Cattle Market.

[The consultation is now available for comment until 15th July.](#)

1.3 Liveable Neighbourhoods: The [Phase 1 Liveable Neighbourhood areas](#) are due to be co-designed with members from each community; a series of co-design workshops are due to go forward from March 2022. **Public consultation on four trial areas identified for 'fast tracking' of design work is anticipated for April 2022.**

[You can sign up for a workshop in your area here.](#)

1.4 Journey to Net Zero: [Journey to Net Zero](#), B&NES Council's long term plan to decarbonise transport and reduce the impact of travel on the climate, is scheduled to go to Cabinet on 5th May. Measures include:

- Mobility hubs to help people in rural communities cycle and walk to direct, convenient bus services into Bath.
- Improved access into Bath along the main corridors through a step change in public transport provision and improved access to bus services.
- New, safer cycling routes, improved crossing facilities and secure bike storage at school sites.
- Improved accessibility for disabled transport users including developing new technologies.
- The introduction of integrated ticketing.

You can read BPT's consultation feedback [here](#).

1.5 New Options for Former Approach Golf Course: B&NES Council is considering further options for the engagement of a new operator on the site of the former Approach Golf Course in Bath. Options include "a golf operator with café provision, or a café operator with the requirement to provide a golf offer." In both cases, any future operator would be required to keep the High Common as a freely-accessible green public space. This follows a previous proposal in 2021 for the use of the site for disc-golf which was declined by the Cabinet on grounds that they were "not satisfied that there are sufficient benefits to commit to a long term solution".

1.6 Bath World Heritage Centre Opened 9th May: The new [World Heritage Centre](#) officially opened to the public on 9th May. The Centre will be open Monday - Sunday and will be free to enter. Supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the Archway Project, the World Heritage Centre will be a springboard for visitors to Bath and local 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.

The accompanying Bath World Heritage app can be downloaded on phones and tablets [here](#).

1.7 Council Reports Success in City Centre Lettings: B&NES Council have released figures indicating strong demand for new properties in Bath from national and high-end independent retailers:

- 32 new lettings have been completed in this financial year so far with a further 16 properties under offer.
- An additional nine properties from the council's commercial estate are currently available, which is predicted could generate a further £250,000.
- The highest demand is currently from the food and beverage sector.
- Lettings will generate more than £1m in new rentals for the financial years covering 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- The council has reduced the amount of rent arrears owed by tenants from £8.9m in April 2021 to £4.4m in April 2022, totalling a reduction of 51%.

[You can read the council's commercial property update here.](#)

1.8 80th Anniversary of Bath Blitz: The 25th April marked the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Bath Blitz.

<https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/history/remembering-417-people-killed-bath-6985984>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-61177755>

<https://www.bathecho.co.uk/news/community/80th-anniversary-bath-blitz-marked-services-97999/>

<https://bathnewseum.com/2022/04/20/wreath-laying-to-remember-80th-anniversary-of-bath-blitz/>

1.9 Bath Area Forum: [Register in advance for the next meeting on 16th June at 6pm here.](#)

2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments

2.1 Western Riverside: [A second public consultation has come forward with proposals for the development of the 19th century gasworks site on Lower Bristol Road](#), now part of the ‘Western Riverside Quarter’, earmarked for the delivery of 1,500 homes in the Local Plan. The first public consultation was held in February 2022 with initial proposals for 625-675 homes as part of a “landscape-led” approach.

This second phase of public consultation now seeks feedback on the proposed architecture and materials used on the site. The development aims to reference the site’s industrial past as a former gasworks through the use of a material palette of brick and metal as well as “an articulated and varied roofscape.”

The goal is to submit a planning application by Summer 2022, with an ‘on site’ starting date of Summer/Autumn 2023.

2.2 Sulis Down: Application [22/01370/FUL](#) has been submitted for the creation of new allotments and associated facilities, landscaping, and parking on Derryman’s Field outside of South Stoke. The proposal is in conjunction with permitted application [17/02588/EFUL](#) for 171 homes on the Plateau as part of Phase 1 of the Sulis Down development. BPT maintains strong concerns regarding increased development encroachment on surrounding Green Belt land and associated impact on significant landscape views within the Cotswolds AONB and World Heritage Site. Our response will be available via the planning portal and our website.

2.3 Waterworks Cottage, Fairfield Park: Application [20/04067/FUL](#) for the development of two new dwellings in the garden setting of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA).

UPDATE - The application was refused at Planning Committee, and the decision had been appealed. The inspector has since dismissed the appeal on grounds of “significant harm” to the character and appearance of the area. The inspector described the proposed development as “an unduly intensive redevelopment of the site”, which would be at odds with the site’s “gentle transition between urban Bath and neighbouring open countryside designated for its outstanding natural beauty.”

BPT has continued to oppose the proposal on grounds of harm to the setting of a NDHA. We maintained strong concerns of the development’s impact on long-range landscape

views across the World Heritage Site, and the visual impact of development on the setting of the Green Belt and Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

A new application has now been submitted to determine if prior approval is required for the demolition of the cottage ([22/01884/DEM](#)). As the cottage is unlisted and located outside of the conservation area, its demolition is covered by 'permitted development' rights. BPT maintains strong opposition to the unjustified demolition of a NDHA of local importance and continue to push for the cottage's refurbishment as an attractive family home.

2.4 Windsor Bridge: Application [22/01093/REG03](#) has been submitted for the demolition of the NDHA gas pipeline bridge as part of wider proposals for improvements to the River Avon pedestrian and cycle path. BPT has expressed strong concerns with the loss of the bridge, recognised as a NDHA, as part of the wide scale programme of clearance and redevelopment of industrial structures to the south of the river. There is a missed opportunity for the possible retention or reuse of the bridge as part of the sustainable transport network. However, we recognise the scheme proposes a number of public benefits and would positively improve access onto the river towpath. We have highlighted the need to retain rare remainders of Bath's industrial heritage, such as the mid-19th railway bridge further east on Midland Road. [You can read BPT's response in full via our website.](#)

2.5 Frome House: Following the refusal of the initial scheme for the change of use of Frome House to provide 66 student bedspaces over the existing ground floor tyre repair centre ([21/04147/FUL](#)), new application [22/01299/FUL](#) proposes a revised scheme for 25 student bedspaces. BPT previously objected to the original scheme on grounds of the excessive height, scale, and massing of the proposed development, and poor design which would fail to sustain or reinforce local distinctiveness. We maintained an in-principle objection to the development of speculative PBSA. The new application proposes the change of use of the existing building with minimal external changes and as such the building's height, form, and profile would be retained as existing. It is proposed to provide 10 cycle spaces and two car parking spaces, one of which will be disabled and the other for pick/up and drop off, including deliveries.

[BPT has maintained an in-principle opposition to the provision of speculative student accommodation.](#)

3. National News

3.1 Levelling Up: The [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#) was announced as part of the Queen's Speech on 10th May. The Bill seeks to change the way powers can be devolved to Local Authorities and introduces reforms to the planning system in England. Changes include the removal of financial risks for local authorities through the scrapping of compensation for the issuing of Building Preservation Notices, as well as increased powers to set completion deadlines for building works and the extension of the period for taking enforcement action to ten years in all cases. Compulsory purchase orders will be enhanced, and local authorities will be granted new powers to designate high streets and

serve letting notices to vacant high street premises to bring vacant buildings back into use. **The second reading of the Bill in the House of Commons is scheduled for 8th June.**

The changes in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will require a new National Planning Policy Framework, which will be available for public consultation in due course.

3.2 Major Acceleration of ‘Homegrown’ Power in Britain’s Plan for Greater Energy Independence: The government has released the [British Energy Security Strategy](#) which sets out how Great Britain will accelerate the deployment of wind, new nuclear, solar and hydrogen, whilst supporting the production of domestic oil and gas in the nearer term, which could see 95% of electricity by 2030 being low carbon.

3.3 Consultation on UK’s Tentative List of World Heritage Sites: The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport is preparing a new Tentative List of natural, cultural and mixed sites for potential nomination for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List, to be submitted to UNESCO later this year, with a view to putting forward nominations to the World Heritage Committee from 2024. Expressions of interest are due by **6th May**. Applications for sites to be included on the new Tentative List are being invited by **15th July**. [Applications can be submitted here.](#)

3.4 Demolition of Oxford Street M&S Paused: Michael Gove has paused the demolition of the 100-year-old M&S store to allow ministers to scrutinise the plans and decide the next steps. It is proposed to replace the flagship Edwardian M&S store with a 10-storey new-build which will include office space and a gym above a smaller shop and a new pedestrian arcade. Despite concerns raised about the carbon footprint of the scheme, it was given the go-ahead in April by Sadiq Khan. The current review was sparked by a report for Save Britain’s Heritage by embodied carbon expert Simon Sturgis who argued that, compared with demolition, a comprehensive refurbishment was the better option. [See Save Britain’s Heritage’s Department Store campaign here.](#)

3.5 New Scheme For EV Charging Points: The Government has introduced a new [Workplace Charging Scheme](#) that will provide grants for organisations to purchase and install electric vehicle (EV) charging points - applicant can receive grant funding of up to £350 per socket (with a limit of 40 sockets across all sites per applicant).

3.6 Great Place Scheme Evaluation: The results of the Heritage Lottery Fund’s £15m Great Place scheme have been published [here.](#)