



Planning & Development News

May 2023

News this Month

- Listed Building Consent Granted for Lobby Refurbishment of **Grade I Guildhall** - see 1.3
- B&NES Council Approached by Firm with **Proposals for New Factory in Entry Hill** - see 1.5
- Bath Rugby Club Launch Public Consultation on Proposals for Development of a **New Stadium at the Rec** - see 2.1
- BPT Maintains In-Principle Objection to Residential Development of **Green Belt Site on Deadmill Lane** - see 2.2
- BPT Responds to Proposals for **Three New BT ‘Street Hubs’ in City Centre** - see 2.3
- Government Consultation on the Introduction of a **Use Class for Short Term Lets** - see 3.1

1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

1.1 Approach Golf Course: Bath’s Approach Golf Course in Royal Victoria Park reopened on 1st May. B&NES awarded a four-year contract to Swansea-based Future Golf Ventures to bring golf back to the site, in the form of Footgolf, which will be ready to play from the start of May. The pitch and putt course is not quite ready and is expected to reopen later, likely by June.

1.2 Explanation Provided for Failed Levelling Up Bid for Fashion Museum: A government document has revealed the reasons why Bath’s bid for Levelling Up funding of £20m was turned down. The document, released via a Freedom of Information request, reveals that the government considered the council’s plans “relatively strong” and in keeping with the aims of levelling up, but it was turned down as there was not enough data behind some parts of the plan. Questions were also raised about the “more costly option” of moving the museum to the Old Post Office rather than to other cheaper locations which had been considered. There were doubts over the council’s ability to secure extra funding. According to figures obtained by Reach Data Unit, it cost the council almost £55k to put the bid together, bringing in various external consultants.

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

1.3 Bath's Historic Guildhall to be Refurbished: Plans for the refurbishment of the Grade I Guildhall have been granted listed building consent. Its Georgian entrance lobby will be substantially refurbished with a new reception desk, repainted walls, and a new "lockdown" security system. Hidden electric bolts will be installed within the double doors around the room, which will be able to be activated to "lock down" the building; the doors are not original and are believed to have been installed after a 1972 fire. Other updates involve removing the existing reception desk, replacing it with a digital display and installing a white faux stone front desk to the left of the entrance.

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

1.4 Fire at Green Park Station: A fire has seriously damaged part of a former railway station-turned-community space at the Grade II Green Park Station. The fire reportedly started in wooden sheds used as retail outlets and the fire then spread to the roof void. It is thought to have been started deliberately.

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

1.5 B&NES Council Approached by Firm with Proposals for New Factory: B&NES Council has been approached by a (as yet unidentified) local manufacturing company who are interested in purchasing the Entry Hill Depot site to build a new factory. The proposed purchaser is seeking consent for a 1,000sqm factory at Entry Hill, a 450sqm warehouse space and an additional 450sqm dedicated to ancillary offices, toilets, canteen and staff facilities. The manufacturer currently employs about 150 people in the city and it is believed that the new factory could create 15 new jobs. A planning application has not yet been submitted.

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

1.6 Council to sell 'loss-making' Midsomer Norton office block: A scrutiny panel has voted to allow the decision for B&NES Council to sell off the Wansdyke Business Centre in Midsomer Norton. Councillor Shaun Hughes, one of two tenants based in the 19-office facility, said the council's management of it was "disastrous", with no new tenants permitted to move into the building, no marketing, and no response to potential tenant requests. The Council has reportedly been paying at least £25,000 a year to subsidise the business centre.

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

2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments

2.1 The Rec: Bath Rugby has published and is undertaking public consultation on the new designs for the redevelopment of the club's current stadium at The Rec on 6th May. Plans are for the development of a permanent stadium with a capacity of 18,000, as well as improvements to the public space along the riverside path. The stadium plans are now available to view on [the Rugby Club's website.](#)

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

The following planning applications have been reviewed by BPT's Architecture Planning and Place Committee:

2.2 Deadmill Lane: Application [23/00893/FUL](#) has been submitted with revised proposals for the development of two detached dwellings on the greenfield site along Deadmill Lane, situated within the Green Belt and the indicative setting of the Bath Conservation Area. The design of the dwellings has been revised from previously refused [22/01220/FUL](#) to be one storey and implement green walls and roofs.

BPT's full objection response has now been submitted, reiterating an in-principle position against any development on this site where it would result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

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

2.3 BT Street Hubs, City Centre: A group of applications were submitted for three new BT '2.0 Street Hubs' as part of a nationwide roll-out, 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. The proposed Hubs would include LED digital screens for advertisements. Three locations were proposed within the city centre: Southgate Street, Southgate Place, and Terrace Walk which forms part of the historic setting of the Grade II* North Parade terrace.

AP&P Committee expressed strong concerns regarding the addition of increased 'street clutter' within the city centre, particularly where this would intrude into key views of a group of Grade II & Grade II* listed buildings. The use of illuminated signage is not generally supported where this would be at odds with Bath's distinctive, low-lit appearance. At nearly 3m in height, the proposed Hubs would be a very large and prominent addition to the street scene.

[Read BPT's consultation responses to all three applications here.](#)

2.4 Bathampton Manor: Application [23/01165/LBA](#) proposed the replacement of a 2006 conservatory with a new single storey extension, to the eastern gable end of the Grade II Bathampton Manor.

AP&P Committee noted that the replacement extension would be more solid in its form and appearance and recognised the positive, 'light touch' qualities of the existing conservatory. Further considerations included the existing embodied carbon of the conservatory.

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

2.5 Bath City Football Club: Application [23/00707/FUL](#) proposed the upgrade of the existing playing surface at the Twerton Football Club to artificial turf, with a proposed biodiversity net loss of -100%. BPT commented regarding general concerns about microplastics and overall loss of biodiversity, whilst supporting the principle of the works and highlighting the positive community benefits that would result from the upgrade works.

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

2.6 30 Park Avenue: Application [22/04394/FUL](#) for decarbonisation works to a residential end-of-terrace dwelling within the conservation area and World Heritage Site.

UPDATE - The application has been granted planning permission for the use of an external, insulating lime-hemp render on the western gable end of this terraced building within the conservation area. Where it was previously proposed that an external hemp-lime insulating render would be applied to the west and north elevations, an objection was raised by the conservation officer on grounds that the changes to the north elevation would be visible from the public realm. The scope of the application had therefore changed to omit the use of render on the north elevation. No objections were raised by the officer in relation to the proposed street-facing position of the PV panels.

2.7 4 Macaulay Buildings: Application [22/03893/LBA](#) for the enlargement of the existing two storey garage extension. **UPDATE** - Revised proposals for a single storey extension at lower ground floor level have been granted listed building consent. The extension was considered to form a 27% overall volume increase, and therefore would constitute appropriate development within the Green Belt. The extension was concluded to be a small scale addition within a discreet location, which would not significantly alter the appearance of the dwelling in its locality.

3. National News

3.1 Government Consultation on the Introduction of a Use Class for Short Term Lets:

The government is currently consulting on options for a new use class, to be used specifically for short term lets. A new use class would mean that planning permission would be required to change the use of a typical residential building (currently Class C3) to a short term let. The consultation intends to address national concerns about the increasing amount of short term and holiday lets and the impact on the sustainability of communities and the availability and affordability of homes for local people.

The consultation is open for public feedback until 7th June; [view and respond to the consultation here.](#)

3.2 Georgian Group Heritage at Risk 2023: The Georgian Group is currently compiling a Heritage at Risk list for 2023, and are accepting nominations. [The 2022 At Risk List is available here.](#)

3.3 Historic England Launches Learning Management System: Historic England's new learning platform and e-learning courses have been launched. Access requires the creation of an account and a personal training record, which records participant progress and stores completion certificates. The platform has launched with our Heritage for Planners: Essentials programme which covers the fundamentals of historic environment management.

[The platform can be accessed here.](#)

3.4 Energy Security Day: 30 March was the government's 'Energy Security Day', on which a series of announcements relating to energy security and delivery of net zero

commitments were made. These announcements included publication of a number of research papers and delivery plans, including:

- [The UK Net Zero Research and Innovation Framework: Delivery Plan 2022 to 2025.](#)
- [The 2030 Strategic Framework for International Climate and Nature Action.](#)
- [The Net Zero Research and Innovation Framework.](#)

3.5 Tentative World Heritage Site Nominations: On 10 April, the government announced that five new sites in the UK and Overseas Territories have been added to the UNESCO Tentative List. The three sites in the UK comprise York City Centre, Birkenhead Park and the Zenith of Iron Age Shetland all of which have been nominated due to their cultural importance. The two overseas sites are the East Atlantic Flyway, a migratory bird route over western parts of Europe including Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent, and the Little Cayman Marine Parks and Protected Areas, which are important natural sites.

[See the Tentative List here.](#)