



## **Victoria Quarter Planning Application 20/1719/FUL**

### **Barnet Cycling Campaign response - 12 May 2020**

Barnet Cycling Campaign is the local borough group of London Cycling Campaign ([LCC](#)). We represent the interests of cyclists living or working in the Borough of Barnet and aim to expand the opportunities for all to cycle safely in the borough.

The group has over 300 members in Barnet of all ages and abilities, including commuter, utility, sport and leisure cyclists. We encourage more active, healthy forms of travel and help to get people out on their bikes and riding on the roads in Barnet. We campaign to make streets in Barnet healthier, safer and an improved experience for all cyclists, walkers and public transport users.

We confine our response to the implications for transport, referencing 20\_1719\_FUL-TRANSPORT\_ASSESSMENT-4746985.pdf.

### **Summary**

This response provides detailed comments and suggestions from Barnet Cycling Campaign (BCC) on how the planning application needs to be changed and on how local infrastructure can be improved.

- The active travel links to High Barnet and Cockfosters stations are not safe for cycling. We make suggestions for mitigation of the risks.
- We make suggestions for improving the links to New Barnet (station and town). Victoria Road needs traffic calming and the mini roundabout on the A110 is also a safety concern.
- We view the improvements to the railway foot tunnel as key to benefit the increasing population as well as users of local schools, businesses, shops and leisure facilities in an area where road safety is already a major concern. (This is addressed in the comments on the route to Cromer Road Primary School.)
- We also comment on route 4 (Livingstone Primary and Nursery School), Route 7 (links to the cycle network) and the Healthy Streets check.

- Within the development, we make suggestions for some minor improvements. We have concerns about the number of car spaces provided. We have concerns about the positioning and security of the cycle parking.

**We therefore object on grounds of highway safety and traffic generation. Disabled persons' access in the area is also problematic.**

Our detailed response below responds to the transport assessment. Quotations from that assessment are in *italics*.

Sent to:

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Copies to:

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Reply to:

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# 1 Connectivity for cycling

*1.12 Since the proposed development site is within a very short distance of the nearest National Rail station and bus stops and is within walking and cycling distance of the nearest London Underground stations it is considered that the site has a very good level of access to public transport modes.*

*1.17 It is considered that the site is readily accessible by non-car modes of transport and is suitable for high density residential development.*

*1.21 The site also has good accessibility to the wider sustainable transport network, to encourage trips to and from the site to be undertaken by sustainable modes.*

1. These assertions imply that it is safe to cycle to both High Barnet and Cockfosters underground stations.
2. London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS<sup>1</sup>) recommended that a cycle route quality criteria assessment should be performed against the existing and planned layouts based on six criteria. We request that such a study should be conducted.
3. No assertions can be made about cycling unless safe cycling routes are provided, such as provision of **segregated cycle tracks** along the A110 and A1000 and a well-designed **Low Traffic Neighbourhood** in Victoria Road and the Bevan Estate towards Cockfosters.

## 2 Active Travel Zone

### 1.1 Route 1: High Barnet Tube Station / High Barnet Town Centre

#### 1.1.1 A110 west of the site

*4.12 In addition, it could be noted that the section of road shown in Photograph 4.2 does not meet the Healthy Streets indicator 'People feel safe'. This is because cyclists may need to swerve to avoid the potholes in the road, consequently putting them at risk of colliding with vehicular traffic. It could therefore be suggested that this section of road could be resurfaced to ensure cyclists are safe along the entirety of the route.*

1. Resurfacing the road will not make this a safe route for cycling and potholes will reappear. Parked cars on both sides and heavy traffic hamper the main A110 route for buses and cyclists. This needs to be improved by rationalising

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1 <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/streets-toolkit#on-this-page-2>

parking and introducing dedicated bus lanes and cycle lanes to link it to the strategic A1000 route.

2. Between the Victoria Quarter and the A1000 (Everyman cinema) the road is wide enough for cycle tracks if car parking is removed. Properties on this road have off street parking to enable this with minimal impact on residents. This would reduce air pollution, improve the flow of all types of traffic and make the buses linking the Victoria Quarter with High Barnet underground more reliable.

## **1.2 Route 2: New Barnet Railway Station**

1. New Barnet Station is the main transport hub for this development and should be one of its chief attractions, but pedestrian, cycling and bus routes serving the station are dismal, unwelcoming and inefficient. The limited and insecure cycle parking needs to be expanded and upgraded.

*4.14 Alternatively, the second route requires pedestrians and cyclists to continue along the A110 for approximately 130m before turning south onto Lyonsdowne Road and then east onto Station Road for approximately 160m before reaching the entrance to New Barnet Railway Station.*

2. Traffic calming and pavement widening is needed to improve cycling and pedestrian access around the junction of Station Road and Lyonsdown Road. Raised tables should be used to provide continuous footways on all junction crossings and to improve the public realm. This should include an improved pedestrian crossing of the A110 for bus users at Stop D.

*4.15 From the site it is notable that in addition to there being no step-free access to the platforms using Approach Road, there is no dropped kerb to cross from the eastern to the western side of the road in proximity to the stairs. It would consequently be noted that the more accessible route, which would be suitable for all, would be the second route along Station Road.*

3. Although the route along Station Road is step free, once at the station it should be stated that there is no disabled access to the platforms. Nor is it easy to carry a bike up and down stairs to take it on the train.

*4.20 This section of the route [Station Approach] does not meet the indicator 'Things to see and do' as this section of pavement is narrow and is made to feel further enclosed by the presence of the high wall on one side and buses on the other. As the width of the pavement is unlikely to be able to be changed, it could be suggested that to improve this area, greenery could be added to make this area more visually appealing and break up the solid wall.*

4. Ugly tower blocks, fast traffic and car parking dominate Station Approach on the York Road side, which could be revamped with an improved bus terminus, a pocket park and a raised table pedestrian crossing. The pedestrian access from the A110, Nirvarna Court, has steep steps, is narrow, dark and unsafe.

### **1.3 Route 3: New Barnet Town Centre**

#### **1.3.1 Victoria Road**

*4.21 To access New Barnet Town Centre, pedestrians can cross Victoria Road using the dropped kerbs in proximity to Albert Road before continuing south onto East Barnet Road (A110) where the Town Centre is reached.*

1. At the gateway location at the top of Victoria Road, a raised table with a change in materials/colour is needed as an informal crossing for pedestrians (currently, the application only includes a raised tables at each end of Albert Road West). Another raised table crossing of Victoria Road should be provided at the entrance to Victoria Park, as this is a popular crossing point for school children from JCoSS. A raised entry treatment should also be provided at Albert Road East to provide pedestrian passage at the same level as the Victoria Road pavement. These measures will calm traffic and add to the impression that this is an area where pedestrians and cyclists should have priority.
2. The mini roundabout is dangerous for cyclists, especially after dark. It is often difficult for drivers from Victoria Road to see cyclists who are approaching the roundabout from the railway bridge as the headlights of following cars can mask them. Consideration should be given to replacing the mini-roundabout with traffic lights to improve road safety at this junction.

### **1.4 Route 4: Livingstone Primary and Nursery School**

*4.30 As such, this section of the route does not meet the Healthy Streets indicator 'Easy to cross' and it could be suggested that dropped kerbs on both sides of the road could be installed in a suitable location, either at the junction of Lawton Road with Baring Road or near to the new access to the leisure centre signposted as 'Pymmes Brook Trail'.*

1. We suggest a raised platform instead of dropped kerbs. A raised platform and tightening the corner radii at Lawton Road / Baring Road would improve pedestrian safety by slowing traffic.

#### **1.4.1 New Barnet Leisure Centre & Jewish Community Secondary School**

1. The new leisure centre has attracted increased car traffic to the area and it appears few customers are using active travel. JCoSS has plans to expand by another 130 students to a total of 1499. On current figures, this means 3% of pupils (45) will cycle, 11% (165) walk, 17% (255) use rail/underground. There is already friction with local residents concerning traffic and parking and LBB has asked the school to increase the proportion of students and staff using active travel.
2. The access and safety improvements we're suggesting around the railway tunnel, Victoria Road and New Barnet station will increase the proportion of all residents and visitors to the area using active travel.

#### **1.5 Route 5: Cromer Road Primary School**

*2.14 Consistent with the previous schemes for the site, it is proposed that the existing elevated walkway is demolished and a new surface level footway is provided across the northern edge of the site to continue the PROW. A separate structure will be put in place to provide access to the tunnel below the railway line. Details of this arrangement are being discussed with Network Rail and are well advanced.*

*2.29 The development will support its residents and visitors to travel by non-car modes by providing extensive cycle parking and an attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists, including improved links to the station, local high street and off-road route crossing the adjacent railway line.*

*4.33 Following on-site assessment of the routes, it is clear that the second route [via main roads] is more accessible and as such would be recommended to be used for those with pushchairs or with reduced mobility.*

1. It is essential that the PROW under the railway line be given step free access suitable for disabled, child buggies and cycles. This will make it the preferred, more direct route for active travel to schools in Cromer Road. It will remove the temptation to drive to these schools in this area, where several road safety concerns have been raised at the Chipping Barnet Area Committee.
2. We welcome the commitment in the latest exhibition boards: "Removal of overpass and new path at grade". 'At-grade' implies level access. We have been asking for accessible ramps on both sides of the elevated tunnel, but a new tunnel at ground level would be ideal.
3. With the demise of the gas works, the reason for having the tunnel at an elevated level disappears and the most accessible solution is to deepen the

tunnel to ground level. Users of Victoria Park have seen a spate of muggings and a ground level tunnel would also improve visibility and enhance the feeling of safety for those using it. If cost is prohibitive, subject to an equality impact assessment for DDA compliance, hairpin ramps of up to 5% gradient on each side, coupled with good lighting and security cameras, may be an acceptable alternative.

4. Accessibility for this route under the railway must be improved for residents of the Victoria Quarter to reach Cromer Road Primary School and Little Acorns Preschool. Parents accompanying children to school will often be pushing buggies for their younger children and the school children could be using bikes, tricycles or scooters. Steps leading to the foot tunnel on both sides mean that this 0.3 mile route will be denied to them, resulting in either a longer and less pleasant walking route of 0.6 miles via the A110, or resorting to using a car. Cromer road should be a 'school street' with no access for traffic at school opening and closing times.
5. Residents may also want to access the north-south railway path, south to the station, which we suggest should benefit from upgrading to an all-year surface and lighting. They will also use the path north to Tudor Park and the Hadley Woods bridleway, which is part of the London Loop, and this should also be improved.
6. Improved access to the new play area and leisure centre in Victoria Recreation Ground will also benefit residents living west of the railway who have difficulty using steps, i.e. pushing child buggies, using mobility scooters or wheelchairs, or pushing bicycles. It should also provide improved access for active travel to JCoSS.

## **1.6 Route 6: Cockfosters Station**

*4.38 In order to reach Cockfosters station, pedestrians and cyclists can first travel eastbound along Victoria Road for approximately 225m before turning north onto Park Road. After approximately 570m, users can then turn north onto Edgeworth Road, immediately crossing onto the eastern side of the road. Continuing to the Langford Road / Mount Pleasant / Edgeworth Road / Grove Road roundabout, cyclists must circulate around the roundabout for approximately 150m to exit onto Langford Road.*

1. The site is accessed from Victoria Road, which has a 20 mph zone that is poorly observed and further traffic calming measures are required.

2. Currently, although there is a 20mph limit, there are no built design features to send a message to drivers to slow down. Use of pinch points should be avoided, as they are a hazard for cyclists.
3. The route suggested for cyclists via Victoria Road, Park Road, Edgeworth Road and Mount Pleasant roundabout is a notorious rat run for motorists avoiding Cat Hill. The entire residential area east of the site, including the Bevan Estate to Cockfosters Road, needs to benefit from a Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme (as outlined in the draft Long Term Transport Strategy). We suggest the best way to achieve this is simply by installing a bus gate on Mount Pleasant east of Belmont Avenue (for the 384 bus, coaches to JCoSS, refuse and emergency vehicles). Interventions for cyclists will also be needed to improve the connection of Bevan Road with Chalk Lane and to provide access to the signalised crossing on the Cockfosters Road at the underground station.

## 1.7 Route 7: Links to the Cycle Network

1. The planning application is disingenuous to suggest there is a cycle network to connect to at all. The 'Barnet Cycleway' starting in North Finchley is a proposed west-east route to Hornsey starting 2.6 miles to the south. It is an inefficient route and irrelevant for cyclists from East Barnet, who would take a more direct route to Hornsey via Osidge and Bowes Park.

*4.43 Cyclists can first travel west along Victoria Road before taking the second exit at the mini roundabout onto East Barnet Road (A110). After approximately 150m, cyclists can then turn south onto Lyonsdowne Road... Longmore Avenue (B193)... Great North Road (A1000). Cyclists can then continue for approximately 3km.*

*4.44 On-site assessment of the route indicates that the least attractive section of the route is the area in proximity to the junction of High Road with Totteridge Lane southbound along this road before connecting with the proposed cycle network.*

2. However, it is right to suggest that the A1000 is a desired route into London that does not meet Healthy Streets indicators.

*4.46 In order to improve this situation, a cycle lane could be installed which would improve feelings of safety for cyclists and may improve air quality as people may see there are cycle facilities, consequently encouraging them to cycle and drive less.*

3. The A1000 has been identified by TfL and Barnet Council as a strategic cycle route and the entire route needs to have dedicated cycling infrastructure

before this planning application can claim to be anywhere near a cycle network.

4. The cycle network and connections to it need to be established before developments are completed, so that new residents have a realistic choice to cycle right from the start and don't need to have a car.

### **3 Within the development**

#### **1.7.1 Albert Road**

*3.39 Albert Road East will continue north, providing access to Albert Road West where several buildings require servicing. At its junction, the urban realm will be designed to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists with materials denoting this and a level surface provided. Consideration to restricted access for vehicles, such as access only signage will be made to reduce usage of this street.*

1. Albert Road West will be the major pedestrian and cycling route for accessing the site - it should be two-way for cycling and access-only southbound for motor vehicles. The pavements are too narrow for pedestrians and the street is too narrow to be shared by motor traffic and cycles. We suggest the entire width should be paved over with a level surface treatment, providing a shared space for all and demonstrate that priority is for pedestrians and cyclists.

#### **1.7.2 Cycle routes through the site**

*3.74 Cycle routes will be developed through the site, which will increase the permeability of the development. In addition, a segregated cycle ramp will be provided to a safe and secure cycle store.*

1. The Design and Access Statement part 3 section 9.5 shows primary cycle routes along the roads and secondary cycle routes along transverse paths. Detail should be provided on the nature of the proposed cycle routes in terms of widths and sharing with pedestrians and traffic. Dedicated cycle routes should be provided to meet the needs to up to 1272 cyclists.
2. Ramps requiring a dismount are unusable by those who are unable to leave the bicycle and walk, such as disabled riders using adapted cycles.
3. Access for cyclists is not shown into Victoria Recreation Ground and should be provided.

#### **1.7.3 Parking**

1. The cycle parking of 1272 covered spaces (1.9 per home) is welcome, but the proposals need to show what security is provided in both external shelters and internal stores. Positioning the 128 external spaces next to the public

footpath at northern edge of the site is not a convenient location, nor is it conducive to security. Even cyclepods can be vulnerable to break-ins and it is best to locate cycle storage internally and where it is overseen.

2. The need for 392 car parking spaces (0.6 per home) seems hard to justify, particularly when compared to car-free developments at High Barnet and Cockfosters, which are also close to stations. Low emission car club spaces should be much greater than the proposal for only 4.
3. The proximity to New Barnet railway station, good east-west bus routes, greater use of car clubs and provision of cycle routes should mean a greater reduction in the need for car ownership. The A110 and local roads will not cope with more traffic at peak periods and proposals should allocate most of a much smaller number of spaces to parking for the disabled and car clubs.

#### **1.7.4 Healthy Streets check**

1. It is difficult to assess changes to Healthy Streets Indicators when comparing the old site, which has now been flattened, to the proposed residential site.

#### *APPENDIX F Healthy Streets Check For Designers*

2. There are no notes provided with the Healthy Streets Check to explain the ratings given and we ask that these should be provided. For example, Indicator 6 for NO<sub>2</sub> concentration for the 'existing' layout has been rated as greater than 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> (legal limit value) and less for the proposed layout. This seems wrong because according to London Air<sup>2</sup> the concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> in 2016 was only 28-31µg/m<sup>3</sup>. We would also like to see some evidence on 'existing' and 'proposed' volumes of traffic to justify some of the other indicator ratings.
3. For a development of this size there is limited outdoor play space for children. Albert Road carries traffic for the gas works through the site and will need to have traffic calming to keep speeds below 20mph.

## **4 Conclusion**

We object to this application on grounds of (a) highway safety, (b) traffic generation and (c) disabled persons' access in the area.

Sincerely,

Jon Crosby

[Barnet Cycling Campaign](#)

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[2https://www.londonair.org.uk/london/asp/annualmaps.asp](https://www.londonair.org.uk/london/asp/annualmaps.asp)